CHRIST'S HEADSHIP OF THE CHURCH ACCORDING TO ANABAPTIST LEADERS WHOSE FOLLOWERS BECAME MENNONITES

J. H. LANGENWALTER

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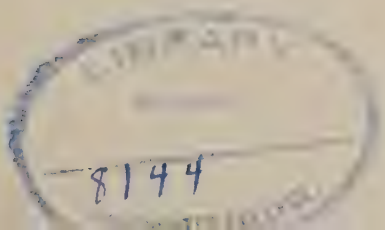
THIS WORK IS LOVINGLY DEDICATED TO MY WIFE WHOSE LOYAL DEVOTION HAS MADE ITS PRODUCTION POSSIBLE



PREFACE

When this work was at first undertaken the question of its publication was practically foreign to the mind of the author. Even now he feels that to make it most valuable to the average reader a careful rewriting would be advantageous. Much material was laid aside which ought to appear for the benefit of those who have not entered deeply into a study of Mennonite History. On the other hand it has been frequently urged that the material found in this work should be made available for the use, especially of the young people, even in its present form and therefore the author has consented to have this child of his thinking to go out into the world to perform whatever work our Father in heaven may find for it. It is not without misgivings that this permission has been granted; it is, however, with the hope that those, who shall peruse its pages with care, may catch some of the same spirit of our forefathers, which has increasingly impressed the author and has made him want to make a contribution worthy of their memory.

Where this book is to be used as a text or reference book in Young People's meetings it will be found desirable to consult freely some of the more general books on Mennonite History found listed in the Bibliography.

The biographies in Chapter III may prove valuable for use in attempting to become acquainted with the kind of leadership which made possible the valuable contribution of the Anabaptists and may prove to be the most usable material for Christian Endeavor or other Young People's classes. If this chapter, or any other portion of the book, should prove to be a source of inspiration to the young people of our churches, then the author will feel repaid for the labor which was necessary for the production of this work.

J. H. LANGENWALTER.

Bluffton, Ohio, March 20, 1917.

FOREWORD TO SCHOOL EDITION

This book was the result of research work done for the most part at Hartford Theological Seminary. It was first published in 1917 and is now re-issued with a few changes in the forepart of the book. As a bit of research work it is better adapted to schools than to the general public.

The subject matter is of special interest during this period of reconstruction when the value of the human element in any problem is again coming into its own, especially as it concerns convictions of far reaching import to human society.

The author gratefully acknowledges the help of many friends both in the production of the work and in the distribution of this edition among the institutions of higher education in the United States of America.

J. H. LANGENWALTER.

Bethel College, Newton, Kansas. March 1922.

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INTRODUCTION

The movement, known as Anabaptism, affords a rich field for speculation because of the fact that it came into such prominence during the Reformation period; because so many divisions, sects and denominations either grew out of it or came thru it and because of the nature of the sources upon which we are dependent for our information.

Anabaptism was not an organized movement in any strict sense. It was a mass movement which made its appearance over the greater part of western Europe. Just when it began is a much mooted question. That there are traces of "a church within the Church" will hardly be denied by anyone today. That, on the other hand, it can be satisfactorily proven that there is a direct connection between such early manifestations of conscious or unconscious dissatisfaction with the established Church and any one of the denominations which have grown up since the Reformation, is still a much debated question. Men have written on both sides of the question and, after reading many of their arguments, one feels that their conclusions are frequently but the reflections of that which they had hoped might be true. The nature of the

sources makes any undeniable proof either way almost impossible.

The question is interesting, and even fascinating, but it is not of vital importance to the present undertaking. The writer takes this position in spite of the fact that nearly all of the writers on the history of the Mennonites have considered the question of the origin of the denomination of prime importance.

The writer has culled his material from available reports, minutes, letters, etc., of civil authorities; from the literature produced by enemies of the Anabaptists and from the meager literature left by members of the movement. These sources were often produced in the heat of controversy or under the stress of torture and it was therefore necessary to weigh them carefully. Much of that which was left by Anabaptists and early Mennonites is simply literature and not in any sense a schematic presentation of their beliefs. This fact has made it necessary to get at the probable position of these people on the question of Christ's Headship of the Church **thru their lives** rather than the things which they are reported to have said. This accounts for the space alloted in this thesis to biographical sketches of leaders. This seems justifiable under the circumstances because so many of the quotations of things said, or supposed to have been said, were conditioned upon character and historical event.

The method of procedure is somewhat unusual

when one considers the nature of the subject of this thesis, but it seemed increasingly, to the writer, to be the best way of getting a correct estimate of the probable thinking of the leaders under discussion.

Much that has been written concerning the Mennonites has been in the nature of argument for the organization. The writer has aimed rather to emphasize the fundamental principles, held by the Anabaptists and early Mennonite leaders, which are of value to Christianity as a whole and he hopes that the large possibilities in this direction may be worthily developed by able writers in the near future.

CHAPTER I

A SURVEY OF THE TIMES AND CONDITIONS IN WHICH THE MENNONITE CHURCH WAS BORN

The name Mennonites comes from one of their leaders, Menno Simon, and was given to a portion of the movement by its enemies. Menno Simon was in no strict sense the founder of the movement which bore his name in certain sections of western Europe even before it was crystallized into the denomination.

The Mennonites sprang from that more or less indefinite movement known in history as Anabaptism. There are those who would like to prove that there is a direct lineal and spiritual connection between the Mennonites and the Waldenses and earlier movements of the same general type. However, strongly as such a succession appeals to many, Dr. C. Henry Smith is probably correct in saying that it is "only a beautiful theory." That there are certain strong resemblances, especially as regards the attitude toward the Roman Catholic Church, the civil authorities, the emphasis upon consistent living, and particularly the desire to return to the practices of the Apostolic Church, is true, but the estimate of Dr. Rufus M. Jones seems to the

present writer as both correct and pertinent when he writes: "It cannot be absolutely established that the Anabaptists were decendants of the earlier mystical movements. What we actually know is that there suddenly appeared just at the dawn of the Reformation, in almost every Christian country, little groups of men and women, who were determined to reconstruct Christianity after the New Testament model, who were bent on reviving primitive Christianity." (Studies in Mystical Religion, p. 370).

It was very natural that such a free, intense type of Christianity should break forth with the Reformation, and it was also natural that when this movement attained the proportions which it very naturally attained during such times of religious, social, commercial and political reconstructions as we find during the first part of the 16th century, that there should be many eddies in the swollen stream of human development. When one takes into consideration the far-reaching influences of such inventions as that of gunpowder and of printing; the mal-adjustments which naturally followed between civil and ecclesiastical authorities because of the Church's ambitions to control governmental as well as spiritual affairs; the effects of Humanism and the terrible oppressions of the poor, one does not wonder that early decades of the 16th century found western Europe confronted with a condition of social, political and religious unrest which

was fraught both with unprecedented opportunities and with grave dangers. Neither does one wonder that those who have studied that situation within recent years should differ so widely in their conclusions as to the causes which led to such a condition of affairs. When men like Karl Kautsky (Communism in Central Europe in the Time of the Reformation) and E. Belfort Bax (The Peasants' War) undertake a study of the situation, one would naturally expect to find them emphasizing the social element. The same is true on the religious side of those writers who have set out to find the causes for that period of unrest from the angle of Church History. These may at times be tempted to under-emphasize the points which the others, to them, seem to have over-emphasized. This fact also accounts for the differences of opinion which prevail regarding various leading men of the Reformation period and the widely varying conclusions concerning the relations of different groups to each other. The present writer feels that such a situation calls for a patient seeking to live one's self into conditions of the Reformation period rather than for the spirit of controversy, no matter what may be the phase of the situation in which one is especially interested. That period was one of intense feeling and activity under high pressure. Entire classes of men, who for centuries had seen few changes, were suddenly thrust into situations calling for great and sudden readjustments. The situation

was kaleidascopic and therefore confusing. Men were shaken up in their entire thinking and consequently did not react in only one phase of their thinking. Hence it seems preposterous to attempt to establish in which one phase of men's mental processes are to be found the causes for conditions as we find them during the Reformation period. The writer has found this fact of increasing significance as he has tried to glean that which men may have thot during that period of stress on the significance of Christ as the Head of the Church.

The invention of gun-powder made the fortresses of feudal lords of little value but it also took from the poor classes the ability to fight for themselves. It materially affected the conditions of the laborers and the merchants and it intensified the question of the relationship between Christianity and war. The invention of printing stimulated education, gave literature to the poor and oppressed so that they came to think, and consequently to act, more independently; it gave men the Bible and thus a greater opportunity to gain a clear conception of Christianity, but it also gave to the enemies of the poor and oppressed and of those who sought religion pure and undefiled a leverage which they had not had before, as is clearly seen from the fact that for centuries our histories have been patterned after the literature of the oppressors and the persecutors and that today we have to face the solu-

tion of the almost insurmountable difficulties of finding out what really were the facts. The spread of Humanism caused the emphasis to be placed on the individual rather than the organization and did much to bring about a better condition of affairs for large masses of people, but it also caused weaker minds and crushed spirits to react in ways which often proved unwholesome for the general welfare; it made men free from tradition and made them see that the primitive gospel message dealt with life and action rather than organization and theological conclusions, but it also made some men, unprepared to see the difference between liberty and license make demands and undertake steps which brought dire limitations upon the freedom which had been, perhaps, all but gained. This is true, e. g. of the Peasants' War and of the "Kingdom of Münster". These two instances suggest, as is so often the case, that the causes were complex. Both social and religious factors enter into the problem raised by these instances. The "Twelve Articles" of the "Peasants" have a religious stamp. Religious leaders gave them their approval. This was true even of Luther (Brons, Ursprung, Entwickelung und Schicksale der altevangelischen Taufgesinnten, p. 3). And the "Articles" were so framed and so presented by the leaders of the "Peasants" as to stand or fall with the Bible. This fact needs to be taken into consideration when one enumerates the causes which are supposed

to have led to this uprising of the "Peasants". Their oppressions beggar description; the frauds which were perpetrated against them were enough to arouse the resentment of any one who was not closed to all sense of human justice or hopelessly browbeaten; the infringements on the natural human rights of these people were often such as to make hatred, in its bitterest forms, seem almost like the most natural reaction, and the breaches of promise on the part of their masters and rulers were so frequent and so heinous that confidence must needs be lost, and yet these social conditions were not the only causes. Even among those who took a direct part in the Peasants' War there was a strata of religious feeling which helped to make that war what it was. This religious factor made for justice in the demands of the "Peasants" and prolonged the time of the outbreak on the one hand and intensified the breach, when it came, on the other hand. (See Ersch and Graber, Bauernkrieg, p. 182, for "Twelve Articles" and also Bax, Peasants' War, pp. 63-75, for copy of complete text of these Articles.) This indicates how the Münster uprising and kindred disturbances should be related to the movement among the "Peasants". Whatever direct interplay there may have been between the Münster uprising and any one or more of the many revolts among the "Peasants" was probably accidental rather than premeditated. Both were reactions against intolerable oppressions. In the one the

social aspect shows up more prominently and in the other religious, but in both there are traces of the social and the religious elements. The Münster movement no doubt intensified the spirit of resistance among the oppressed and in so far helped to aggravate the trouble which the rulers had with the "Peasants," but there is no conclusive evidence that there was any systematic co-operation between the two movements. The Münsterites used the methods which the Roman Catholic Church had taught them thru practices, and used them as oppressed people usually use such methods when they come into power suddenly. While the leaders of this movement held to some of the principles of the Anabaptists, they also differed widely from them on others and certainly stood in no recognized organic relationship with the Anabaptists who were merged into that portion of the movement later called Mennonites. Furthermore, the attitude of prominent Anabaptists toward the Münster movement shows that the Münsterites could not have allied themselves closely with the Anabaptists unless they would have changed their theories and practices so materially as to have made impossible the historic Münster scandal.

In this connection it is well to consider briefly that Münzer, had been a Lutheran pastor and that he had held his pastorate with the consent of Luther. He was a restless spirit. His education made him all the more dangerous when he once set out in the

work which has made him notorious. He denounced the clergy of the Roman Catholic and also of the Lutheran churches. In this he is comparable to many of the Anabaptist leaders, but their methods of procedure were very different. So long as he confined his denunciations to the Roman Catholic clergy he was welcome to remain in his pastorate, but when he turned the same weapons against similar sins in the ranks of the Lutheran clergy, his days were counted. This opposition provoked his fiery spirit to all kinds of excesses. He became unreasonably iconoclastic, considered himself a prophet sent from God, held his inspiration to be higher in authority than the Bible and engaged in other similar extravagances. There were enough similarities between the things he preached and the beliefs of the peaceful Anabaptists to confuse even some of their members, but he was never a recognized Anabaptist.

It is also noteworthy that the Münsterites were made up of members of the various established churches as well as of the Anabaptists. This fact gives weight to the argument of those who would make it appear that it was exclusively a social movement, which was merely intensified by religious fanaticism. There is no doubt that religious fervor entered into this uprising very materially. The study of the Bible showed one of its first effects in this tragic event and one need not wonder that superficial students of

this period sometimes hastily conclude that it had been better to have withheld the Bible from the hands of the common people, when they see how its use influenced the leaders of the "Münster Kingdom". One must not forget, however, that without the fearful oppressions which they endured, these same people doubtlessly might have become peaceful members of society similar to those which the study of the Bible made elsewhere, where the weight of oppression had not quite so nearly reached the crushing point. The Münster leaders turned to the Old Testament rather than to the New because they had been reduced to a condition where primitive conceptions of righteousness and the idea of self-preservation alone were left, and these two combined by the force of bitter experiences and the examples found in the Old Testament of how the God of Israel had meted out justice to the wicked oppressors of old, naturally made these men feel that there should be a return to such measures in order that present oppressors might be dealt with as they deserved.

The same conditions made it natural for them to turn to the Chiliastic literature of the Bible. Conditions were so bad that there seemed to be no hope for their betterment except in a cataclysmic event such as the Apocalyptic literature of the Bible foreshadowed. The danger of invasion on the part of the Turks made the early occurrence of such an event seem all the

more probable and it was therefore not at all surprising to find that, in the heat of intense fervor, born of hatred resulting from bitter oppression and of the hope of early relief, men are reported to have said that they would support the Turks when they came.

This period was necessarily one in which one would expect to find many things occurring which, at the first glance appear like the grossest kind of inconsistency. A closer view makes it appear that some of them were not fundamentally inconsistent and that many more of them were inconsistencies which grew out of conditions not under the control of those who were the perpetrators of these acts. A careful consideration of this fact will make it easier to deal justly with the leaders of all movements which played a prominent part during the first half of the 16th century.

The conditions of the time in question also gave an opportunity to adventurous spirits, and these were not lacking. They confused the situation and sometimes the leaders who were honestly endeavoring to put matters aright. These facts, no doubt, account for many of the difficulties of such men as Luther and Zwingli. They have both been charged with gross inconsistencies for which their friends have found various excuses and on account of which their enemies have all too often manifested a kind of "Schadenfreude". This is not as it should be. We need a broader outlook upon

the times and the men of the Reformation Period if we are to learn from that significant incident in history the lessons which the same is capable of imparting.

It is not surprising that Luther should, as some one has said, have succeeded in lighting the inflammable material which had been prepared thru the occurences before the beginning of his public work, without seeing the consequences of his action clearly. He evidently felt that this was the case, for he compares himself to a blind horse being led up a hill. Such a frame of mind is, however, not a reflection upon his character, or a just cause for denouncing his work as a whole.

Luther had the misfortune of being a popular leader at a time of great transition and it is not surprising that he could not meet the expectations of any one of the many exponents of the many trends of thot prevailing at that time. Naturally enough everyone of these expected Luther to emphasize those points of conflict dearest to the exponents, and many of them were bitterly disappointed. Giving vent to this disappointment was no encouragement to sweetness of temper to a man of Luther's constitution, especially when the pressure of the results of the affairs which he had helped to bring about began to weigh heavily upon him. It is therefore necessary, as Stevens says, in connection with some of Luther's controversies: "In citing the opinions of Luther, some allowance must doubtless be made for his vehemence and his rhetor-

ical extravagance." The present writer has no interest in glossing over the errors or inconsistencies of Luther, but a sense of fair play makes him feel that one-sided criticism is so dangerous a thing that one may well ward off the danger by entering sympathetically into the psychological workings and problems of a man with whom one cannot agree on many points, and it is with an appeal to the same sense of fair play that the writer suggests that it would be well to make some allowances for the kind of replies which Luther's "vehemence and rhetorical extravagance" evoked from those who were compelled by force of circumstance to deal with Luther in matters which were of first importance to them and who often quailed under his "vehemence and rhetorical extravagance" to such an extent that they either severed their relations with him or repaid him in his own coin.

Luther was human and it may not be impossible that he had, as Brons says (Ursprung, Entwickelung und Schicksale usw. p. 391): "Become so used to having people look to him that he could not endure other leaders by his side." This may account for some of his vehemence and may also have been the reason why others were provoked to similar means of expressing themselves.

There was about Luther a conservatism which was rather remarkable in some of its aspects. It made him a man of unusual self-possession. This becomes espe-

cially apparent when one thinks of Luther's temperament and the times in which he lived. He did not fully break with the Roman Catholic Church for ten years after his declaration at Wittenberg, for we find that two Franciscan monks and two Evangelical preachers preached alternately in the Great Church (Grossen Kirche) at Emden and in the Franciscan cloister ten years after Luther is usually thot to have severed all connections with the Roman Church. This could hardly have occurred if Luther had been as radical as he has sometimes been portrayed and it also suggests why Luther was inclined to be impatient with and even intolerant toward those who were not willing or able to accommodate themselves as readily as he to things of an established order, especially when the time came that the established order was of his ordering.

As we shall see in succeeding chapters, there were many who were keenly disappointed by Luther's conservatism and felt that he had not carried the Reformation far enough. Most of these, in the heat of the controversy, seem to have blamed him with unwillingness or arbitrariness in the matter; others have suggested that it was sheer inability to do the constructive work necessary to carry the Reformation to a consistent conclusion, e. g. Bax says: "Luther had known how to pull down an old house but not how to build up a new one." (The Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists, p. 3.)

Is it not possible that these intimations aim at secondary causes and that the prime cause was Luther's conservatism? Unless we overestimate Luther's conservatism, it made him unwilling to go farther than he felt sure that things would work out well. Whatever may have been the primary cause or causes, the fact that Luther did act cautiously and showed intolerant impatience with those who did not so act, in his estimation, led to endless misunderstandings and divisions. Luther's earlier expressions had led people to expect him to go farther than his conservatism allowed him to go after the movement had been fairly started. This, on the one hand, is not strange, for grave responsibilities have made more than one man conservative and have made his contemporaries impatient with him on that account. It is probably in this direction that one should seek the explanation for the change of front on the part of Luther who in 1516 wrote to Spalatin in regard to Tauler, the famous mystic: "Neither in the Latin nor in the German have I ever found purer or more wholesome teaching, nor any that so agrees with the Gospel," and his later attitude toward some of Tauler's most consistent disciples. This may also account for the fact that during his earlier public work he agreed, in his conception of the Church, with those whom later he condemned and persecuted for holding that same conception. Such changes of front were very often considered just cause for com-

plaint and opposition, and they cannot always be satisfactorily explained. At best they were unfortunate, especially because of the fact that, as time passed, Luther seems to have become increasingly afraid to entrust the Christianity which he had "rediscovered as religion", as Loofs says, to the people in any but a theological garb which tended to hide it from them again. Even when one gives Luther the benefit of every doubt as to his moral responsibility in the matter, one can readily see how such unexplained changes dogmatically insisted upon should have caused people to lose confidence in his leadership, and it is also quite readily conceivable that men thus disappointed would, under the stress of circumstances in which they found themselves, hardly do otherwise than react more or less forcibly against the cause represented by a leader like Luther.

What has been said concerning Luther also applies largely to Zwingli. He, too, was afraid to grant others the same rights which he had demanded from the Roman Catholic Church. He wanted to safeguard against a possible victory on the part of the Roman hierachy by establishing a State Church. This makes it evident why he wanted no schisms, even tho it does not furnish a satisfactory excuse for the cruel intolerance which he showed toward those whose principal desire was the establishment of a religious life in which the practices were emphasized rather than the

doctrines. It can hardly be denied that Zwingli, in his attempt to stamp out the Anabaptists, resorted to measures of a nature which bordered upon treachery. It is no wonder that the people eventually became suspicious that they had simply fallen into the hands of a new popedom and therefore became increasingly sympathetic toward those whom they were supposed to help persecute. If this attitude on the part of the common people had made Zwingli abate his hatred toward the Anabaptists in the same measure in which he ceased his threats, much of the tragic history of the declining years of his life would probably have never transpired. Naturally enough, those who felt his wrath were not in position to consider fully the fact that Zwingli was overworked, nor could they fully realize how heavily his new responsibilities weighed upon him and how sensitive he would be toward anything which increased his burdens, and especially when, at the same time, it increased his fear of being overwhelmed by the Roman hierarchy.

It was particularly unfortunate for the whole Reformation movement that Luther and Zwingli should have become entangled in such a bitter feud. It is not germane to the purposes of the present work to investigate in just how far the one or the other, both or neither, may have been blameworthy, but the fact that they became thus engaged had its far-reaching influence upon the counter-Reformation with which we

shall deal in later chapters. Bax is quite correct when, speaking of this deplorable fact, he says: "Meanwhile the effect of the continuous theological wrangling of the Reformers amongst themselves, who showed themselves only thoroughly united in their attack on Catholicism and on certain Catholic usages, was to detach large numbers of the non-learned classes from the positive dogmatic system that the learned were endeavoring to set up in the place of the old Catholic theology." (Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists, p. 9.) Only he need not have restricted it to "the non-learned" as we shall see later.

This survey gives one an idea of the complexity of the situation at the time when disorganized movements began to crystallize and also suggests some of the difficulties which would arise from such conditions. These conditions were well adapted to make men wonder in how far the "Church" had a right to call itself "Christian", or, in other words, in how far Christ had anything to do with the history which was being made by the Churches which called Him their Head.

CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS OF ANABAPTISTS

"Anno 1524 and 1525 A. C. is God's Word and the Gospel of Jesus Christ come into all Germany, after the Peasants' War." (Geschichtsbücher der Wiedertäufer in Oesterreich Ungarn. Herausgegeben von J. von Beck, II, pp. 11, 12, quoted from Bax, "Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists," p. 3.)

Sebastian Franck, in his Chronick, III, fol. 188, observes respecting the spread of the new movement: "The course of the Anabaptists was so swift that their doctrines soon overspread the whole land and they obtained much following, baptized thousands and drew many good hearts to them; for they thought, as it seemed, nothing but love, faith and endurance, showing themselves in much tribulation patient and humble, etc."

Brons (pp. 11ff in "Ursprung, Entwicklung und Schicksale", usw.) suggests that the Anabaptist movement was an echo of the principles laid down in the Sermon on the Mount and of the practical and ethical portion of the Apostolic letters. This suggests why the letter of James was so highly esteemed by them

and may explain why Luther, in later controversies, permitted himself to go so far in condemning that letter.

This movement arose principally from the broad strata of the common people. Occasionally members of the privileged classes allied themselves with this movement. It is quite possible that this may have been out of ulterior motives. Kautsky suggests that wealthy men often united with the poor Christian parties to fight the Church and that they withdrew their support just as quickly as they were no longer served by such union, thus leaving these poor Christian parties to their doom of annihilation by the Church or to endless splits among themselves. Be this as it may, the fact remains that there was a profound and general reaction among the masses of western Europe against the abuses of the Church. This reaction seldom took the form of an organic separation from the Church until persecution made such a step necessary. This accounts for the difficulties, due to lack of preparation, for organized procedure among the dissenting bodies. Thus it came about that men who were agreed on the most fundamental points of doctrine differed on the question as to whether they should leave the established Church. Those who did were early called Anababtists, but later it occurred that all who criticised the attitudes of the Roman hierarchy, the Lutheran or the Zwinglian churches thru word or life, were brand-

ed as Anabaptists, even tho they had not formally severed their connection with their Church.

The fact that political, social and economical as well as religious factors came into play necessarily produced a great deal of confusion among the dissenters themselves. The movement was essentially democratic or even individualistic and the fact that local conditions played such an important role in the manner in which the dissent often manifested itself, made a general, unified uprising an impossibility. Hence it seems best to consider the entire movement as a simultaneous but unorganized reaction against the abuses of those in power. The people consciously or unconsciously felt the need of democracy but the spirit of the age was against it and their leaders had not yet learned the methods of democratic leadership fully enough to guide them in attaining to the desired freedom quickly and successfully.

There were many lords and masters and hence many degrees of abuse. This necessarily resulted in a great variety of opinions as to just what was wrong among those who felt the results of the maladjustments most keenly and, since neither the ruled nor the rulers saw clearly just what were the causes for the existing strain, it was natural for the former to lose confidence in the latter and for the latter to consider all those who did not fit themselves into existing conditions as mal-contents who needed to be subdued.

The rulers had the advantage of combining and did not miss their opportunity of using it. This fact may have contributed to the naming of all kinds of "unruly" subjects Anabaptists. This name suggests that the rulers considered the movement a religious one, but that does not necessarily imply that they thot of it as a **spiritual** movement. For the purposes of this thesis we shall confine ourselves to that part of the movement which was religious in the spiritual sense.

The members of the so-called Anabaptist movement preferred to be called Apostolic Brethren, but their preferences were consulted as little in this matter as in that of their faith and their practices. They have been known by many names: Wiedertäufer (Anabaptists), Widertäufer (Katabaptists), Taufgesinnten (Baptist-minded), etc. Later that portion of the movement in which we are more especially interested came to be known by the names: Manisten, Mennisten, Mennoniten (Mennonites), or Protestant Mennonite Church. (Märtyrerspiegel, I, p. 14.) The latter designations also came from the enemies of those so named. (Rues, Simon Fr., Gegenwärtiger Zustand der Mennoniten, p. 1.) Also see Mennonite Year Book, 1899, p. 20.)

It has sometimes been inferred from the name that the question of baptism was the sole cause of all the tragic history which was made in connection with the Anabaptist movement. This is not the case, however.

Baptism came to the forefront because of the fact that it was used as a sign of membership in the new movement. The fact that this new movement had been started as a protest against the evil practices among the powerful classes in both Church and State naturally made its ensign odious among the members of these classes and it was they who advertised baptism until it stood for all that was hateful to them and to their colleagues.

At first there was little attempt on the part of the people who desired a new emphasis on religion to formulate their conceptions scientifically. They simply stated their conviction and seem to have felt that that should be sufficient to make the authorities, and especially the preachers and the priests, take steps which would correct the evils existing within the Churches.

The earliest confession of faith of which we have any knowledge now was drawn up at Schleitheim, near Schaffhausen in 1527. It was called "A Brotherly Union of Some Children of God." The following is an epitome of the points contained in this "Confession":

1. "Baptism.—Baptism shall be administered to all who are taught repentance and a change of life, and truly believe in the forgiveness of their sins through Jesus Christ, and are willing to walk in newness of life; all those shall be baptized when they desire it and ask it by the decision of their own minds, which

excludes all infant baptism according to the Scriptures and the practice of the Apostles."

2. "The Ban or Excommunication.—This shall be practiced with all those who have given themselves to the Lord, to follow His commandments, are baptized, and call themselves brethren and sisters, and yet stumble and fall into sin, or are unexpectedly overtaken; these after admonition according to Matthew 18, if they do not repent shall be excommunicated."

3. "Breaking of Bread. — All who wish to break 'one bread' in remembrance of the broken body of Christ, and drink of 'one cup' in remembrance of His shed blood, shall be united by baptism into one body which is the congregation of God and of which Christ is the Head."

4. "Separation from the World. — The Christian must be separated from all the evil and wickedness that Satan has planted into this world. According to II Cor. 6:17, 18: 'We shall come out from among them and be separate'; separate from all Papistic works and services, meetings and church-goings, drinking houses and other things which the world highly esteems."

5. "Ministers.—The ministers shall, according to the teaching of Paul, be of good report of them that are without. He shall teach, exhort, and help all the members to advance in their spiritual life. When he has needs he shall be aided by the congregations which

chose him to his work. If he should be driven away, or imprisoned, or killed, another minister shall at once be put into his place."

6. "Taking the Sword.—The worldly governments of the land are to use the sword, but in the perfect congregation of Christ, excommunication is used, by which no one suffers violence to his body. Peter says: 'Christ has suffered (not reigned) and has given us an example that we should follow in His footsteps.' Neither is it the Christian's work to have a part in civil government, because the rulings of government are according to the flesh, but the government of Christ is according to the Spirit. The weapons of the world are carnal, but the weapons of the Christian are spiritual to the overcoming of the world and Satan."

7. "Oaths.—Christ, who taught the law in perfection, forbade His disciples all oaths, whether true or false. By this we understand that all swearing is forbidden."

(For a more complete statement of the foregoing seven points see Appendix I of this work; for a briefer statement see Moeller, History of the Christian Church, Reformation to 1648, pp. 89f.)

Men are sometimes struck by the simplicity of this statement and wonder why it contains nothing of the many things of which they had heard that Anabaptists believed. One must not forget that "confessions" were often wrung from adherents of the movement by

the use of cruel torture. Records were made of these "confessions" and these formed the bases for statements concerning the beliefs of the Anabaptists. (For a sample of such a record see Appendix II).

It is surprising that such procedure was able to produce no more discrepancies among the things confessed.

Another fruitful and more satisfactory source of information concerning the beliefs of the Anabaptists and early Mennonites are their hymns. These were composed during times of persecution and were often confessions of faith in rhyme. They were committed and sung or recited as opportunity offered. For a long time the value of these hymns was under-estimated, but within recent years efforts have been made to make use of this material. (Cf. Dr. Rudolph Wolkan, Die Lieder der Wiedertäufer.) Their enemies report that the Anabaptists had many such hymns describing the deaths of those who were executed and that they sang these according to popular melodies. (Cf. Wolkan, Die Lieder der Wiedertäufer, pp. I and III of his Vorrede for a discussion of the information given by Erhard and by Fischer.) These enemies were scandalized at such conduct on the part of the Anabaptists. Their own information, however, shows us of what value these hymns were in disseminating the beliefs of the Anabaptists. When men and women, driven from their homes or places of secret abode, went about

singing or reciting the stories of their martyred brethren, exalting the faith and courage of these departed ones, it was little wonder that the great mass of people, groaning under the load of oppression, caught the vision of a new hope. Such people naturally allied themselves with the movement which furnished them the new inspiration.

The emphasis of the Anabaptists was on life rather than doctrine. They preached their message with conviction because of this very fact. Bax says of them: "The preaching of these people produced startling effects. With a greeting of peace they would enter a cottage and begin to expound the Bible to the inmates." No wonder that the congregations sprang up everywhere. Yet these people would have consented to remain in the established churches if the gross immoralities of the priests and preachers had not made that impossible.

The Anabaptists were simple-minded people who took the Bible literally, especially those portions of it which deal with the ethical aspects of life. They felt that if a man had confessed Jesus Christ as his Lord, he was bound to live a Christ-like life. They felt sure of the correctness of their position concerning this point thru the conviction, born of an intuitional feeling as to the difference between right and wrong rather than thru the conclusions reached by process of logic. This accounts for the fact that they were

loathe to frame dogmatic confessions and also suggests why so many of them mistrusted the learned whose logic caused them so much discomfort and whose evil lives made them under-estimate the value of learning. Not all Anabaptists reacted thus, for some of them valued learning very highly but they all deplored that the learned, as a class, made such bad use of their opportunities and in this they were not alone, for Erasmus wrote to Capito in 1518: "I wish that there could be an end to scholastic subtleties, or, if not an end, they could be thrust into a second place and Christ taught plainly and simply. The reading of the Bible and the Early Fathers will have this effect. Doctrines are taught now which have no affinity with Christ, and only darken our eyes." If men like Erasmus felt thus about the matter it is not surprising that the Anabaptists reacted as they did, nor is it any wonder that the unlearned masses lost all confidence in learning, for, as Kautsky says: "A class or community which is in the process of decline, or hopelessly trodden down by others, will oppose itself to the knowledge of truth." (Communism in Central Europe, p. 19.)

As a result of their emphasis upon the ethical side of Christianity, the Anabaptists were forced to the position that no man had a right to consider himself a member of the Church who was not even trying to live according to the will of Christ. This position brought

them into conflict with all those churches which made members of people before these, or any one else, could tell what kind of lives they were going to live. An investigation as to the Scriptural validity of infant baptism followed and many reached the conclusion that there was no Scriptural warrant for the same. Luther, Zwingli and others later sacrificed this conclusion for their ideals of the Church, but the Anabaptists concluded that they would drop infant baptism and baptized each other on confession of faith. Henceforth to them baptism meant that the recipient thereby declared that he would be obedient to God and that he had become a member of the real Church, the "Body of Christ". This position led to the charge that they considered only those members of the "Body of Christ" who had been thus baptized. The evidence adduced in presenting these charges is convincing only in so far as it applies to non-representative cases, however. Besides it is well to remember that these charges were brought by enemies who admit that they get the statements upon which they based the charges from those whom they were torturing. The representative leaders of the Anabaptists stood for no such narrow view. If a man gave evidence that he was a child of God by the kind of life he lived, they considered him a Christian and many of them deplored the fact that the corruption of the leaders of the established churches was such that they were compelled to form a new or-

ganization at all. It seems that they would have been willing to remain in the Church and use the rite of baptism simply as a sign of personal confession and not as the sign of membership in a temporal organization, but this idea was soon suppressed by the persecutions which followed. They wanted no new organization. The experiences of Luther and Zwingli were no encouragement in the direction of starting new organizations and besides the nature of their desires was such as to make them want life and not more machinery. They were mystically rather than politically inclined. Finally, however, they acted under the slogan, "New wine in new skins," and thus gave expression to the conviction that there was no longer any use in trying to reform the established order of things.

The foregoing presentation of things does not leave out of consideration the history made at Münster and other places where similar, tho less notorious, things transpired. No denomination now existing, which took its root in the Anabaptist movement, finds that its leaders and the leading spirits of the Münster and kindred movements were of one mind sufficiently to have remained long with one organization. The Münster leaders differed widely from the representative type of Anabaptists in many important points, e. g. in their attitude toward war, toward the magistracy, in their chiliastic intepretations and their apocalyptic hopes, etc. That individual members of repre-

sentative Anabaptist communities were drawn into this maelstrom of fanaticism, desperation and fatal tragedy is true and, under the conditions, not surprising, but it is also true that there were those, in no way connected with the Anabaptists, who were drawn into the Münster uprising. That the representative leaders of the Anabaptists were not willing to recognize the leaders of the Münster episode is now generally admitted. In fact, they are sometimes blamed for not having done so.

The Münster incident should be looked upon as a natural fruit of the excessive oppressions of the lower classes. Their leaders would probably have acted differently under less desperate circumstances. When people become crazed by the bitterness of conditions and are subjected to man's inhumanity to man as were these people, one cannot expect them to act with great deliberation. Schiller was quite right when he said in his "Das Lied von der Glocke":

> "Gefährlich ist's, den Leu zu wecken,
> Verderblich ist des Tigers Zahn;
> Jedoch der schrecklichste der Schrecken,
> Das ist der Mensch in seinem Wahn."

The most vivid portrayals of the things which the frenzied people at Münster are supposed to have done may not be overdrawn, but that does not make the Anabaptist movement responsible for the history which was made there. Those are responsible who

drove them to such desperation and not the Anabaptists who tried to dissuade them from their extreme measures. We have too long allowed ourselves to be blinded by the prejudiced reports of the responsible parties in this matter.

The effects of the Münster uprising were a misfortune for the peaceful Anabaptists because of the indiscriminate application of the name "Anabaptists" to all "personna non grata". This tragic episode gave to the ecclesiastical and the political authorities a, to them, satisfactory occasion for taking more drastic (if that were possible) steps to suppress and eradicate the people whose lives were a condemnation of their own. The fact that the Anabaptists professed no desire to be anything but peaceful members of society, obeying all authority so long as its demands were not contrary to the will of God, counted for little with their persecutors. This only reminds us, however, that "revolution is not made agreeable to men who hate it by the moral excellence of those who would affect it" (Fairbairn, Philosophy of the Christian Religion, p. 323). The inhuman methods to which the persecutors resorted make one feel with Brons that it is a wonder that there were not more eccentricities. This is true, especially after the vehemence of Luther and the fear-born hatred of Zwingli were added to the intrigues of the Roman Catholic leaders. Such attitudes on the part of these leaders make one feel that they were not en-

tirely unselfish in their positions for, if cruelty and deceit are at the bottom of selfishness because the development of any selfish passion leads to these, as Dr. MacKenzie says, then these leaders, great as they may have been in other respects, certainly showed themselves to be the possessors of large capacities for selfishness. They certainly showed themselves willing to sacrifice others. They seemed to be little affected by the fact that their victims admittedly led exemplary lives (this very fact seems at times to have increased their hatred against the Anabaptists); that others felt obliged to raise their voices in protest because of the inhumanities perpetrated in the name of religion and that the killing of so many God-fearing people meant irreparable loss to the domains in which these persecutions were waged. (For examples of estimates of the character of the persecution and of the persecuted and for examples of protests by Schwenkfeld, various church and civil authorities and others, see Appendix III.)

In the presence of such facts one wonders what eccentricities might have occurred at Münster if the irony of fate had made the leaders of the persecution into the leading spirits of the oppressed classes!

These persecutions robbed the Anabaptists of most of their ablest leaders and unfitted many of the members for the new responsibilities which thus arose. This condition of affairs reacted unfavorably upon the

work of education among the Anabaptists. It is remarkable that they accomplished as much as they did for they maintained their own schools in secret even during the times of persecution (Brons, p. 27) and carried on their teaching vive voce when their schools were made impossible. They taught their children large portions of the Bible and they gave them the opportunities coming from catechetical instruction. During the earlier days of the persecution they had many highly educated leaders but many of these were killed and others were hindered from teaching or writing and finally there came a time when there was a great dearth of educational facilities. This was not as the Anabaptists had wished it, for it led to conditions which they and their successors have had much reason to deplore (cf. e. g. Keller, Die Reformation und die älteren Reformparteien, p. 477). It was among those groups of the Anabaptists where education had been suppressed that chiliastic hopes and interpretations later found entrance, but these did not have a deciding effect upon the development of the movement later called Mennonites.

The few leaders who remained had learned the lesson, taught by the excesses of the Münster uprising so well that they persistently warned their followers against anything which might lead to a repetition of such occurrences. It is remarkable how, under the conditions, they were able to make such constructive

use of the misfortune and the tragedies of their times. Let us note for instance the following quotations from the works of Menno Simon: "They (the children of God) must in all misery, ignominy and trouble take upon themselves the pressing cross and must follow the rejected, outcast, bleeding and crucified Christ, as He Himself said: 'If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.'" (Part I, p. 183.) "Persecutions will not cease so long as there are righteous and unrighteous people on earth." (Part I, p. 181.) He also composed a list showing "how persecution serves for our good" of which the following is an epitome:

1. It keeps from inclining toward earthly ease, peace and prosperity which have so great a tendency to ruin and undo us before our God and to render us careless, refractory, lukewarm and drowsy.

2. It makes us lay aside the sins which so easily beset us.

3. It keeps us from fleeting thot.

4. It puts us to a severe test, even such as Christ experienced.

5. It gives us firmness of confidence, tranquility of patience and vehement ardor of prayer.

At the close of this summary we may conclude that whatever the detailed differences of opinion may have been as to Christ's Headship of the Church, the vastness of the Anabaptist movement shows that among

the masses there was a strong feeling that in the working out of things Christ was no longer the Head of the established churches; and the means used by these churches show that whatever their confessions may have been about the Headship of Christ, in their anxiety for the success of their respective organizations they preferred to lean upon the strong arm of the law and to depend upon the arms of the human lords!

This brief summary of the conditions found among the Anabaptists during the first half of the 16th century also leads us to conclude that we can not expect to find statements concerning Christ's Headship of the Church which were made as a result of scholarly research and formulated with scholarly nicety, but it also shows us that these people were far from being devoid of conceptions on this point. To them the Church was the body of those who belonged to Christ because they had chosen to accept Him as their Savior and consistently followed Him as their Head. The Anabaptists could not conceive of Christianity under any other arrangement and reacted against anything else called Christianity so powerfully that they were willing to give up everything in defense of their conviction.

CHAPTER III

REPRESENTATIVE LEADERS OF THE ANABAPTISTS AND EARLY MENNONITES.

We find many types of mind represented among the Anabaptists and early Mennonite leaders. This is not surprising when we take into consideration the conditions under which they were brot together and the fact that the movement was so little organized. Then, too, the fact that so many of these leaders were quickly removed by death leaves room for speculation as to what they might have thot, said, written or done if the cruel hand of persecution had not removed them so early from the scene of action. As things are, it happens that different denominations claim the same men as their spiritual ancestors. This seems no serious condition of affairs to the present writer, especially in view of the purpose of this work. The very fact that these leaders were of one mind on such fundamental questions as to make it possible for various denominations to claim them legitimately is proof that they are worthy of serious consideration on so far-reaching a question as Christ's Headship of the Church.

Brief sketches of the lives of some of these leaders

are here presented for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the types of mind found among those whose views are considered representative on the question under discussion and also to see under what circumstances they gave expression to the thots and views which are of interest to us.

A study of such lives is both profitable and pathetic. "Those who had this vision, and with it had the power of restraint and the gifts of statesmanship to see what would **work** and what would not work in the world as it actually was then, became the leaders of the Protestant Reformation and have their renown in the pages of history. Those who had this vision and who were resolved to **make the world fit the vision,** with no shade of leveling down and no hair's breadth of a compromise, became the leaders of Anabaptism, risked everything for the cause they believed in, flung out ideals which have been guiding stars for us ever since, went to death in terrible fashions, and fell on almost total obscurity. It is a story well worth telling and quite worth reading." (Studies in Mystical Religion, Dr. Rufus M. Jones, p. 371.)

A. Hans Denck.

"Christum vermag niemand wahrlich zu erkennen, es sei denn, dass er ihm nachfolge im **Leben.**" This brief quotation from the writings of Hans Denck gives us a deep insight into the kind of thinking which he

did. He was a man who lived but a short time but he influenced many toward better thinking and, what was of more concern to him, toward better living.

We know little of Denck's early life. Even the place and date of his birth are unknown. Kessler calls him a Bavarian and Vadian refers to him as a youth at a time which makes it probable that Denck was born near the close of the 15th century. He is characterized as a quiet, chaste youth who gained favor very rapidly because of his personal charms and his gifts. He was a teacher and was well versed in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Such men as Kessler and Capito regarded him highly as a man altho they deplored very much that he was affected by such "terrible heresies". The same was true of Bucer who felt that Denck had abused his gifts by using them for the cause of the Anabaptists. He called Denck the Pope of the Anabaptists. Urbanus Rhegius called him the Abbot of the "Brethren". Berthold Haller, in writing to Zwingli regarding Denck, calls him "the Apollo of the Anabaptists". Johannes Bader refers to him as "the noted Hans Denck with whom he would not dare to compare himself". Peter Gyhraeus calls him "the Head of the Anabaptists" and Bullinger calls him the "Rabbi" among the Anabaptists. These estimates, coming from such who were not in sympathy with the cause which Denck had espoused, show that he was a personality of no mean ability.

Denck studied at the University of Basel at the time when Desiderius Erasmus wielded his influence upon the German intellectual world. Denck did not get his views from Erasmus, however. He received the degree of Magister Liberalium Artium from the University of Basel. He became a proof-reader in Basel and continued his studies at the University during his spare time. The publishers of those days were usually cultured men who stood high in the literary world so that his work as well as his studies afforded Denck cultural opportunities. During this time he attended the lectures of Oecolampadius and even had private conferences with him. For this he was later accused but truthfully maintained that Oecolampadius had not changed his views in regard to the Anabaptist movement.

Denck owed very much to Tauler and one cannot understand either the religious teachings or the conduct of Denck unless one remembers that his views and ideals were related with the activities of the "Friends of God" and the "Children of God", e. g. Heinrich Eckhart and Johannes Tauler. Denck also was a mystic, but not of the hermit type. He believed that God imparted Himself to His followers in a practical way, as well as thru the Bible and thru the intellect. Luther and Zwingli had come under the same mystical influence but reacted in a different way when once they faced their life-work.

In 1523 Denck was made rector of the St. Sebaldus School at Nürnberg, which was then the center of the intellectual life of that portion of Europe. This position came to him thru the influence of Oecolampadius. Thru Osiander's influence the followers of Luther had succeeded in getting the magistracy on their side and thus practically introduced the Lutheran Reformation. There were many, however, who felt that the situation was not satisfactory because there was no more emphasis on moral living than there had been under Roman Catholic rule. Hans Sachs made serious charges against the conduct of the Lutheran leaders; Uhlhorn admitted gross inconsistencies and even Osiander, who was considered by the followers of Luther as one of the leaders among the Reformers, made similar charges. Such conditions naturally made a man of Denck's temperament and character very thotful. Little did he think, however, how soon these things would mean persecution, separation from his young wife, a few short years of very bitter experiences and then an untimely death for him. He soon felt himself compelled to raise his voice in protest against the evil practices within the Church. This brot him into difficulties with Osiander who could not bear to be opposed by any one. When Denck insisted upon a life consistent with the confession Osiander began to oppose him. A discussion on the Lord's Supper led to serious differences and Osiander had him called

for a disputation. An enemy of Denck reported that he answered so skillfully that it appeared useless to dispute with him verbally any longer and he was ordered to give his views in writing. This he did, as requested, on the Holy Scriptures, Sin, the Righteousness of God, the Law, the Gospel, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Osiander had promised him a written answer but failed to keep his promise because "he thought that it would not help Denck anyway"! Denck was ordered to leave the city on short notice and not to come within ten miles of the same again. This he did without remonstrance, altho the order came to him as a painful surprise. He left Nürnberg January 21, 1525, because "he had introduced and defended several errors."

Denck's life became one of much misery. He had to leave his family and spend much of his time with such who were much beneath him in ability and character. His ability would have opened flattering positions to him if he had been willing to compromise his conscience in order to return to the party in power. For such a step his nature was too fundamentally truthful. He soon became the victim of base slanders which unfortunately have been handed down as facts. A man who could convince Hans Hut that the Münsterites were wrong in opposing the magistracy was not the kind of character that the enemies of Denck tried to make him appear. This resorting to slander

seems to have been a favorite means among persecutors at that time, but it was especially severe in Denck's case and especially hard for him to bear because of his temperament. His behavior under these trying circumstances is characteristic of the man and an honor to the conception of religion with which he allied himself. "Ich bin dermassen von etlichen versagt und verklagt worden, dass es auch einem sanften und demütigen Herzen schwer möglich ist, sich im Zaum zu halten. Es ist mir vieles unbillig zugemessen worden . . . Gleichwohl tut es mir in meinem Herzen wehe, dass ich mit manchem Menschen in Uneinigkeit stehen soll, den ich doch nicht anders erkennen kann als meinen Bruder, dieweil er eben den Gott anbetet, den ich anbete, und eben den Vater ehrt, den ich ehre . . . Darum will ich (so Gott will) soviel an mir liegt meinen Bruder nicht zu einem Widersacher und meinen Vater nicht zu einem Richter haben, sondern mich inmittelst mit allen meinen Widersachern versöhnen . . . Ich bitte meine Feinde um Gottes willen, dass sie mir verzeihen, was ich ohne mein Wissen und ohne meinen Willen wider sie getan habe. Erbiete mich auch daneben allen Unfug, Schaden oder Schande, so mir etwa von ihnen widerfahren wäre, nimmermehr zu rächen." Such was the mind of the man who was banned and persecuted because his life and his opinions were a condemnation of the lives of those who were in power.

During this time of exile Denck used every opportunity for study and for writing. This made his banishment easier for him and gave him an opportunity to provide literature for the cause he represented.

For a while he found refuge at St. Gall, where he published his first booklet, "Wer die Wahrheit wahrlich lieb hat, mag sich darin prüfen, in Erkenntnis seines Glaubens, und dass sich niemand in ihm selbst erhebe, sondern wisse, von wem er Weisheit bitten und empfangen soll." He was highly regarded at St. Gall until he became intimate with the Anabaptists.

We next find him at Augsburg, where he was baptized by Hubmeier and thus formally joined the Anabaptists. Influential friends secured a teaching position for him. He was the kind of man who was needed at Augsburg for conditions were even worse there than they had been at Nürnberg. Denck entered these conditions with high ideals and with a keen desire to help make them better. He was deeply moved by the condition in which he found the poor people and he did all he could for them. The addition of his influence caused a very rapid increase in the number of the Anabaptists. He succeeded in winning two monks, Siegmund Salminger and Jacob Dachser. These seem to have been able men for they were soon made deacons of the community and both became the writers of hymns.

Most of the members continued to come from the lower classes but the number from the upper classes also increased with the acquisition of able leaders such as Denck. Denck was not by nature adapted to be the organizer of a new movement but he was a very valuable member for the same because of his unusual ability. This fact was also recognized by the enemies of the Anabaptists and they were not slow in getting rid of Denck. Urbanus Rhegius, one of Denck's worst enemies, said of him: "Dencks Wirken hat bald um sich gefressen wie der Krebs, zu vieler Seelen jämmerlichen Schaden. Die Schlange hat sich im Paradiese der neuen Kirche festgesetzt." Such an attitude on the part of Rhegius and others soon made it necessary for Denck to leave Augsburg and he went to Strassburg in the fall of 1526 because the Reformers at that place took a more irenic attitude toward the Anabaptists.

At Strassburg, Denck found Capito and Bucer. For a while these took a friendly attitude toward him, but when his influence made even Lutheran leaders, e. g. Matheus Zell, become intimate with the Anabaptists, Bucer became suspicious and, following Zwingli's method, got the magistrates on his side. (For evidences of Zell's friendly attitude cf. Keller, Ein Apostel der Wiedertäufer, p. 158.) Bucer ordered a disputation with Denck. Denck readily followed the order of the magistrate little suspecting that this was but a

ruse. On the next day he received his orders to leave the city. Capito had been present at the disputation but had said nothing. He soon afterward declared his allegiance to Zwingly in a fashion very unbecoming to a man in his position. (Cf. Keller, Ein Apostel der Wiedertäufer, pp. 161 and 164ff.) Bucer had been a Dominican monk and was well trained in such tactics. Capito had shown more conscience but was weak, as is shown by his practical betrayal of Denck toward whom he had often shown such friendliness when there was no danger involved. Denck was deeply grieved by this attitude of Capito and seems to have had quite a fight against utter discouragement as a result of this fickleness on the part of a supposed friend, but he rallied and met this new and crushing defeat and banishment in a pathetically beautiful spirit. He did not return evil for evil but in the dead of winter set his face toward new wanderings and hardships. He never replied to the cowardly accusations made against him, but he did write soon after that such treatment made it difficult for even a mild heart to contain itself. These experiences no doubt had something to do with his later tendency toward melancholy.

While men were writing calumnious warnings against Denck he was writing an admonition to all men to love every one, even their adversaries. The contrast in these literary products, resulting from the

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same historical facts, shows the difference in the characters of the authors.

Denck went to Worms where he found the Anabaptists represented in such numbers that the magistrates feared to act arbitrarily toward them. He used his leisure by joining Ludwig Hetzer in a translation of the prophetic books of the Old Testament into the German. Their translation passed thru many editions (15 in 13 years) and was freely used in later translations. Luther praised it highly and probably used it, until he found out its source, and then he condemned it!

Denck's leisure at Worms was of short duration. The rapid growth of the Anabaptist movement led to disputations which made it necessary for him to leave Worms in June of 1527. In September of the same year we find him at Augsburg where he presided over the Synod of the Austrian Anabaptists. There were about sixty present. Among these were Hut, Hetzer, Faeber and Hubmaier. This synod did fundamental work for the Anabaptists of Southern Germany. This synod became known as the "Martyrs' Synod" because a majority of the members later lost their lives for the cause which they had represented at Augsburg.

After the adjournment of the synod the various members were sent as emissaries to the different churches. Denck was sent to Switzerland, but when he reached Basel his constitution gave way under the

strain. The magistrates had but recently issued a decree forbidding the giving of any aid to the Anabaptists. This placed the dying Denck into a predicament. In his straits he wrote to his former teacher, Oecolampadius who nobly responded by a personal visit and, seeing that Denck's days were counted, cared for him. He also attempted to persuade Denck to give up his views. Denck wrote a summary of his beliefs which has frequently been treated as a refutation of his former position, but the attending circumstances make its validity as such appear rather doubtful to many careful writers.

Denck died before the end of the year, much comforted in his declining days by his good conscience and deeply grieved because of the deplorable conditions which he had seen in the world during his short sojourn therein.

Hans Denck is now known principally among the learned, but there was a time when he was the source of supreme inspiration for the masses of whom his influence made martyrs of the noblest type.

Keller thinks that Denck belongs to the movements of Francke and Schwenkfeld rather than that of the Anabaptists and Jones feels that Denck hardly belongs to the Anabaptist movement, at least not when the term Anabaptist is used in the loose sense in which it is often used. (For the views here referred to cf.

Keller, Ein Apostel der Wiedertäufer, p. 3, and Jones. Spiritual Reformers, pp. 17ff.) Such views are not surprising. One cannot tell what turn Denck's relations with the Anabaptists might have taken had he lived. It is quite certain that he would not have sanctioned some of the things which happened in later Anabaptism, but this might be true of things which have occurred in the ranks of other movements or denominations which have been influenced by the thinking of this man. His own statement: "Gott ist mein Zeuge, dass ich nur einer Sekte, welche die Kirche der Heiligen ist, gut zu sein wünsche, wo sie auch sein mag", shows what was his attitude toward all religious organizations. He was concerned with the right relationship with God before he was anxious about the organization. This is also shown in the following statement: "Hart ist für mich die Heimatlosigkeit und drückend, aber mehr noch drückt mich dies, dass meinem Eifer der Erfolg und die Früchte so wenig entsprechen. Um keine andere Frucht ist es mir zu tun (Gott weiss es), als dass recht viele eines Herzens und Mundes Gott, den Vater unseres Herrn Jesu Christi, rühmen, ob sie beschnitten oder getauft sind, oder keins von beiden. Denn ich bin ganz anderer Ansicht als die, welche das Reich Gottes allzusehr an Zeremonien und die Elemente dieser Welt binden, wer sie auch sein mögen." (Keller, Ein Apostel usw., p. 229.) The latter statement can be understood in

various ways, and has been so understood, but Denck probably simply meant to emphasize the need of placing the life before the ordinance and symbols.

The writer does not wish to be understood as tho he desired to claim Denck for the Mennonites in the sense that it should be accepted as a valid conclusion that Denck would have become a Mennonite in name if he had lived 25 to 30 years longer. Denck is included in the present list because his life and works wielded a definite influence upon portions of Anabaptism which were later known as Mennonites and because he agreed with many of the fundamental beliefs of the later Mennonite Church.

B. Michael Sattler.

The subject of this sketch is supposed to have been the author of the Schleitheim Confession, issued in 1527.

Little is known of Sattler except that he was a learned man who had been a monk but had left the Church in order to join the Anabaptist movement. G. Bossert, writing in the "Realencyclopaedie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche", says that Sattler was born at Stauffen sometime between 1490 and 1500 and that he studied at Freiburg and then entered the cloister of St. Peter at the same place. Sattler began to study the Epistles of Paul in the cloister and soon found that the Way to Righteousness was another

than that which was indicated by the Church. He was an earnest, moral man and loathed the immoral lives of the priests and monks. He left the cloister and married. Persecutions had arisen and he was forced to leave his home. He went to Switzerland and then to Zürich where he formally joined the Anabaptists. Later he went to Strassburg where he met Hetzer. Here he also met Capito and Bucer. They were friendly but the three never came to an agreement with each other. This was reason enough why he should leave Strassburg and therefore he went to Austria where Reublin was at work and helped him. It was here that he wrote the seven articles which have become known as the Schleitheim Confession. He sent copies of these to the adherents of the movement at various places. He also strove for a church which should consist of converted people only. This brot him into difficulties with the Swiss libertinism. He organized his Church on such a basis that it might call and dismiss its pastor. This gave the Church the control of the situation at all times. This was especially advantageous for the individual communities in times of persecution when they were likely to lose their leaders suddenly.

On his return from a trip Sattler was captured with a number of others. Some of these escaped, but he was incarcerated with his wife. Unfortunately the authorities had also captured all of his correspondence.

They found it difficult to convict him and the means which they used were attrocious in the highest degree. He was finally tortured to death on May 21, 1527, and his heroic wife was drowned in the Neckar two days later. During his captivity he succeeded in sending his "Trostbrief an die Gemeinde Gottes". (For a copy of this cf. Märtyrerspiegel, Part II, pp. 5ff. His Confession of Faith and the account of his trial and execution are also to be found in the same work, pp. 3ff.)

The death of this man was a heavy loss to the Anabaptists, especially because of his ability and his character. These qualities were recognized even by his enemies. Bucer called him "a dear friend of God even though he was a prominent member of the Anabaptists". Capito wrote the magistracy ten days after Sattler's execution: "Obwohl Michael Sattler etwas Irrung im Wort gehabt und die Unterweisung der Prädikanten zu wenig beherzigt, da er bei denen, welche Christen sein wollten, ein ärgerliches Leben befand, so hat er doch allemal einen trefflichen Eifer zur Ehre Gottes und der Gemeinde Christi bewiesen, von der er wollte, dass sie fromm, ehrbar, rein von Lastern, unanstössig und den Draussenstehenden ein Vorbild zur Besserung durch gottseligen Wandel sein sollte usw."

One wonders that these men made such confessions after the almost indescribable treatment accorded by their own people to the man whom they thus lauded.

Surely there is nothing so strangely inexplicable as the inconsistencies of man's inhumanity to man.

C. Ludwig Haetzer (Hetzer).

Ludwig Hetzer is justly looked upon as one of the important Anabaptist leaders of Southern Germany. His ancestors are said to have been Waldenses. He had received a thoro training and had joined the Anabaptists because the Reformation of Luther and Zwingli did not satisfy him. He associated with Denck and Sattler and shared his labors with them. He and Denck made the translation of the Prophetic Books to which reference was made in the Sketch on Denck. These three men labored together in various places and their work was crowned with almost phenomenal success, and with bitter persecutions! They advocated a reformation on the basis of the Apostolic Church and in doing so met with a hearty response on the part of the common people, especially after they saw that the organizations of Luther and Zwingli promised to do little more than the Roman Church had done.

At Strassburg Jakob Gross had organized a church. He taught that children should not be baptized and that adults should be baptized only on confession of faith; that there should be no swearing of oaths; that the sword should not be used in matters of faith, either against the magistracy or against a neighbor. Gross was tried and testified that he would obey the magis-

tracy but would not kill any one as there was no commandment of God to that effect. (Cf. Brons, Ursprung usw., pp. 408-9, for Hetzer's confessions before the authorities on the question of obedience to the magistracy.) Gross was banned from Strassburg and Sattler took his place. Denck and Hetzer became his associates and the three worked with such success that the clergy became alarmed and demanded a disputation. The results were never published but the three men were banned from the city. (For a copy of the mandate banning them cf. Brons, Ursprung usw., pp. 409-10.) In accordance with their principles, to obey the magistracy in all things not contrary to the will of God, they left the city and went to Worms without having rebelled against the established order of things or attempted to defend themselves.

At Worms Hetzer, Denck and Sattler spent their leisure time in writing until Luther's jealousy and his denunciations from the pulpit started new persecutions. One of the Lutheran clergy had joined the Anabaptists (here usually called Apostolic Brethren, as they preferred). This aroused such a storm of opposition to the Anabaptists that there was a schism introduced into the ranks of the Evangelical Church. The people would no longer stand for the radical methods of the leaders. This condition of affairs gave the Roman Catholics an opportunity and they were not slow in making use of it. Luther appealed to the

magistrates for help and wreaked his vengeance upon the Anabaptists, whom he blamed for the whole trouble, as usual. The three men who "caused him the trouble" in this case soon ceased their activities for Sattler was burned in 1527; Denck died a few months later and Hetzer was killed in 1529.

Serious charges were preferred against Hetzer's morality, but when one notes the sources and thinks of his protracted association with men of the character of Denck and Sattler, one is inclined to take these charges with some moderation. Even tho it were true that, for a time, he had been a child of his age or had had his moral lapses, he certainly showed thru his work as a translator and as an itinerant preacher-pastor that he was also capable of better things and that he was willing to suffer persecution and death for the latter at a time when the temptations on the other side must have been exceedingly great.

D. Melchior Hoffmann.

Melchior Hoffmann came from Suabia. He was an imposing character and a morally clean man. By trade he was a leather-dresser. His educational advantages had probably been limited but he had a very thoro knowledge of the Bible and knew how to use it with great effect in public assemblies.

Hoffmann joined Zwingli's movement and remained with it for 6 years, altho Zwingli seems to have

disliked him and to have caused him to flee. Zwingli referred to him as "Der Taugenichts, der Leder gerbt".

Hoffmann agreed with the Anabaptists on only a few points, and on some of these only partly, but his power over the masses helped to swell the ranks of the new movement. In a way it was a misfortune for the movement because he, perhaps unintentionally, but really, played into the hands of the Münster movement and thus helped increase the hatred against anything, known as Anbaptism. This fact made some of the Anabaptists return to the Reformed movement.

The same conditions which caused Denck, Sattler and Hetzer to work constructively among the masses, made this untutored man go into a kind of Apocalyptic frenzy. A detailed study of Daniel 12 increased this tendency. His exegesis of this chapter was quite erratic on the whole and yet, it contains a surprising amount of valuable material. (Cf. Brons, Ursprung usw., pp. 376-7.)

Hoffmann spent some time in Denmark where he enjoyed the king's favor for a while. This aroused the jealousy of the clergy and they succeeded in having him driven out because he would not say that the "actual body of Christ" was in the Lord's Supper! He went to Strassburg where he found favorable conditions for his kind of propaganda. There he met Sebastian Franck and Kasper Schwenkfeld. He was

on friendly terms with these "noble and godly men" and came to recognition thru them.

Bucer and Hoffmann agreed in their views on the Lord's Supper but not on the magistracy, in which the latter followed Denck, Sattler and Hetzer. This so aroused Bucer's ire that Hoffmann had to flee to Emden, which was then the only place in the Roman Empire where "Anabaptists" were not persecuted.

Hoffmann had only recently been baptized and thus formally joined the Anabaptist movement, but he rose rapidly in the estimation of the Church at Emden and seems to have been given a great deal of liberty. He baptized 300 people within a short time. Even the count came to hear him and was moved to tears by his preaching. The count was so favorably impressed that the opposition of the Lutheran clergy against Hoffmann had no effect upon him until some of Hoffmann's meetings had led to riots against the latter's wishes, for he said: "Wer mit dem Schwert ficht, wird mit dem Schwert gerichtet, wo sie nicht mit herzlichem Leid wiederkehren; denn der Christ, welcher voll des Glaubens ist, thut niemand Böses, ist auch kein Vergelter des Uebels: 'Mir gehört die Rache, ich will vergelten Gutes und Böses'." This attitude is further emphasized by his statement concerning the Christian's attitude toward the magistracy: "Soll man ihr nicht gehorsam sein? Du sollst sie

fürchten, wenn du Böses thust, aber wenn du Gutes thust, nicht. Du sollst ihr auch im Guten, das nicht wider Gott ist, gehorsam sein. Wären lauter Christen in der Welt, so würde man des Schwerts nicht bedürfen. Da aber das nicht ist, so muss das Schwert Gottes Dienerin sein; es soll aber allein bei den Uebeltätern gebraucht werden." (For further expressions on the magistracy cf. Brons, Ursprung usw., pp. 399-400.)

Finally the enemies succeeded in getting the count to issue a decree commanding "all Anabaptists to leave his domains in East Friesland by March 2nd, or forfeit life and property". This caused Hoffmann to return to Strassburg, from whence he seems to have taken occasional tours into various parts of Germany between 1530 and 1533. Increasing pressure on the part of the enemies seems to have intensified his Chiliastic and Apocalyptic tendencies to a point where it became an open question whether he was not temporarily insane, as Brons suggests. One can hardly account for the sudden changes of view-point on any other supposition. One is not surprised at this when the attending circumstances are taken into account. The inhuman cruelties and the kaleidoscopic disharmonies in almost every sphere; the natural calamities, e. g. floods, forest fires, diseases, etc., made it very easy for the people to conclude that the end of the world must be near at hand and gave a man like Hoffmann both a

mighty influence and an occasion for becoming more erratic.

Hoffmann continued to agree with the Anabaptists that one's faith must be proven by the Scriptures rather than by creeds and in his conception of the Church. He says: "Gottes Gemeinde weiss von keinem andern Herrn und Fürsten als Christum. Sie kann keinen andern leiden, denn es ist ein Schwester- und Bruderwerk. Die Lehrer haben kein Haupt, der sie im Geiste regiert, als Christum. Die Lehrer und Diener sind nicht Herren. Die Hirten haben nicht mehr Gewalt denn Gottes Wort zu predigen und die Sünde zu strafen. Ein Bischof soll aus der Gemeinde gewählt werden." He desired a spiritually independent Church and said that he wished that it might be composed of members all of whom were spiritually far enough advanced to be able to prophesy.

Some of Hoffmann's views were dangerous material in the hands of adventurous spirits and cast an unfortunate reflection upon his character and upon the Anabaptists. Strangely enough this very man was able to build up a strong church in the midst of the turmoil which surrounded him. There was a time when he might have had a share of the property which had belonged to the Roman Church, but he refused to accept it, unlike those who later persecuted him.

Hoffmann seems to have been unfortunate in some ways, e. g. in the selection of his successor and in the

way he expressed himself at times. When he said at Kiel: "Wir müssen uns einigen, sonst wird es viel mehr Blut kosten, als es bereits gekostet hat," he seems to have meant his statement as an argument for closer union in order to prevent the Roman Catholics from getting an undue opportunity and not as a Münsterite threat, as was claimed by some.

Hoffmann's views on the Incarnation were at variance with those of the Anabaptists, as well as with those of the Protestants. He taught that Christ had passed thru Mary as the sun's rays pass thru glass. His reason for this view seems to have been that he could not conceive of Christ as the child of human parentage because of original sin (Erbsünde).

Hoffmann's career was interrupted by his imprisonment in 1533. He had predicted his imprisonment as a part of the Apocalyptic program which was about to be enacted. The effect upon the masses was both pitiful and tragic. His changes of attitude and many of his expressions at this time indicate that his mind had become unbalanced. This did not alter the result of his influence which came to its fruitage in the Münster uprising. He broke with the Anabaptists on very salient points, e. g. the attitude toward the magistracy and the taking up of arms on account of faith.

Before his death Hoffman made a "Confession" of which Bucer made much use. Brons refuses to take

the "Confession" seriously because the original was never produced.

Hoffmann's treatment while in prison was such that Kasper Schwenkfeld wrote a very pointed letter to Leo Judae about the matter. (For a copy cf. Brons, Ursprung usw., pp. 404-5.) Schwenkfeld did not agree with Hoffmann in many points, nor did he want to slight Bucer, but a common human interest made it necessary to protest very decidedly.

When Hoffmann heard of the fearful conditions at Münster he probably felt as had Luther on the Wartburg. Not being able to go in person he wrote fiercely against the oppressors. This only added fuel to the flames of the persecution and odium to the name of the Anabaptists, altho he had practically broken with the latter.

Hoffmann's life, in spite of his eccentricities, was one of much importance to the Anabaptists. He helped to crystallize the meaning of the movement in the minds of both friend and foe. His eccentricities showed to the leaders that a more definite organization was necessary and the disapproval of these eccentricities by representative leaders of the movement made outsiders see more clearly that there was a real distinction between "Anabaptists" and Anabaptists.

For the purposes of the present work the life and work of Hoffmann are of value largely for the con-

trasts which they furnish and have been given so much space for that reason.

E. Konrad Grebel.

Konrad Grebel was born at Zürich during the last decade of the 15th century. His father was a man of social rank and a member of the Zürich Council. Konrad was educated at the universities of Vienna and Paris. He ranked high in scholarship but led a dissipated life.

Grebel was an ardent supporter of Zwingli until they differed, apparently on the question of infant baptism. Zwingli thot highly of him during the period of their co-operation and described him as "most studious, most candid, most learned". Grebel was converted about 1522 and thereafter led a life of "perfect rectitude and piety". He turned to a careful study of the New Testament and got from this a new conception of the purposes of the Church. Zwingli opposed him on this point, altho there may have been other reasons why he turned against young Grebel. There seems to have been jealousy between the two families. Perhaps because of Zwingli's lower rank socially. This fact may also help to account for Zwingli's inexcusable conduct toward the elder Grebel whom he had beheaded on suspicion that he was accepting a pension from the Roman Catholic authorities. This act caused Zwingli much trouble for it made

the people suspicious of the kind of justice they were likely to get from such a judge. This made him attempt to justify his act in a letter to Oecolampadius, Capito and other friends at Strassburg. He seems to have feared that the act would harm his reputation. He did not succeed very well with his justification because the people knew that the Grebels were as much opposed to the pensions as Zwingli professed to be. The result was that a number of Zwingli's own followers became decidedly dissatisfied on account of his rash act.

The execution of his father so weakened young Grebel, whose health had not been good for some time anyway, that he died soon thereafter. He has often been accused for having acted and spoken rashly. This may be true and it would be surprising if he had not done so. His enemies naturally made use of every semblance of rashness on his part.

Grebel did not make any original contribution to the Anabaptist creed. He accepted what he found and emphasized it in his own way, tho with more intelligence than a less tutored man would have done. He opposed the defense of the Gospel with the sword and believed that real Christians should be as sheep among wolves rather than conduct themselves as did the Münsterites. This and other expressions of Grebel are found in his letter to Thomas Münzer, written September 5, 1524. (A copy of this letter is found in "Geschichte des Mün-

sterischen Aufruhrs, Zweites Buch, Die Wiedertäufer", pp. 240-249.—C. A. Cornelius.)

F. Felix Manz.

Felix Manz was called a first-rate Hebrew scholar. He was a man of considerable evangelistic ability and possessed a great deal of enthusiasm. He was the first among the Swiss Anabaptists to suffer martyrdom for their cause. He had brot hundreds, and perhaps thousands, into their ranks during the short time allotted him for his labors. He worked much with Grebel and Blaurock. They were frequently asked as to their position and frankly confessed that they had begun baptizing on confession of faith and were partaking of the Lord's Supper in their Brotherhood; that they were opposed to the exactions of usury and the tithe on the part of the authorities and that they considered all war as not allowed for Christians. The latter point was objected to by Zwingli, especially because he was then preparing to wage war against some of his Catholic neighbors.

The three men were tried. Grebel soon died; Blaurock was whipped out of the city and Manz was condemned to be drowned because he had baptized "contrary to the Christian order (Ordnung)"; "had solicited followers for his views; had denounced capital punishment and had claimed specific revelations for himself", thru all of which "he had disturbed

the brotherly unity". His possessions were confiscated by the government and on January 25, 1527, the executioner rowed down the Limmat with this victim of Protestant rule carried out in the spirit of Roman Catholic heresy-hunting. A Reformed clergyman attempted to induce Manz to recant while his mother and brothers were encouraging him from the receding shores. After having prayed, "Domine, in manus tuas commando spiritum meum," he disappeared beneath the waves of the small lake which was surrounded by such beautiful scenery, but by no means ideal conditions in the realm of spiritual matters. This execution was but the beginning of a long list of atrocities committed against those who wanted to live according to the dictates of their consciences, guided by the Holy Scriptures, a people who wanted to acknowledge Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church thru life rather than thru profession. These were persecuted by such who made the profession but who wanted no stirring up of their consciences on the question of living up to the same.

G. Georg Blaurock.

The subject of this sketch was also called Jacob of Chur. He joined the Brethren (Anabaptists) in 1524 and soon proved that he was a strong accession to the cause. He had a powerful control of speech and succeeded in convincing both old and young. He was the

man who had actually introduced rebaptism by requesting Grebel to baptize him. (For a complete account of this transaction cf. Erbkam, "Geschichte der protestantischen Sekten", p. 527 note.)

In spite of frequent imprisonment he continued preaching with great power of conviction in such places as it seemed at all safe to do so. He was finally captured again in Tyrol and was burned at Innsbruck September 6, 1529.

In popular parlance he was known as "der starke Joerg" and as "der zweite Paulus". His enthusiasm and his power of language made him a strong leader of the common people, especially since he was able to perpetuate his influence thru the hymns which he composed, as well as thru his public addresses. He was much feared by the enemies because, when thoroly aroused he did not hesitate to let them feel his sarcasm.

Blaurock's contribution lay largely in the fact that he sacrificed the positions which his ability would have given him in order to throw his great strength and whole heart into the cause of Anabaptism. Wedel calls him "eine markige Gestalt". This was the kind of material which the rough Alps furnished to the Anabaptist movement. It was not always highly polished, but effective and good at heart with a disposition unalterably devoted to the Church of which Christ was to be the Head in fact, as well as in name.

H. Wilhelm Reublin.

The name of this man appears in many forms, e. g. Reublin, Reubel, Rublin, Rubli, Roeublin, Rouebli, Reiblin, Raebl, Raebli, Raebel, etc.

Little is known of Reublin's early history. The fact that he requested Ferdinand for permission to avail himself of his inheritance at Rothenburg, is taken as evidence that his parents were well-to-do.

He studied at the universities of Freiburg and Tübingen, but seems to have been ordained to the priesthood before completing his course.

Reublin boldly attacked the prevailing corruptions and superstitions. This brot him very large audiences and the enthusiastic support of the working classes. He refused to carry relics in the processions and carried the Bible instead because he considered the Bible a truly sacred thing whereas the relics were but "dead bones" to him. Such "heresy" caused him to be banished but he continued preaching wherever he found opportunity to do so. He broke his priestly vows by marrying. His experiences led him to a closer study of the Scriptures which resulted in his beginning to doubt the validity of infant baptism. He persuaded parents to withhold baptism from their infants, valiantly defended his position at the Zürich disputation on January 17, 1525, and was among the first to introduce believers' baptism. The resulting banishment

sent him from Zürich to Waldshut where he met and baptized Dr. Balthassar Hubmaier and a number of others.

Reublin was widely known as "Pastor Wilhelm". Much of his work was itinerant preaching. This brot him into contact with most of the leaders of his day.

His persecutors finally made it necessary for him to seek refuge among the anti-pedobaptist Communists of Moravia where he spent miserable years because he was not willing to place the emphasis, demanded by his hosts, upon communism. His declining years are pathetic because he was an able man without a field of labor and, of necessity, an object of a kind of charity which was none too sweet.

I. Pilgram Marbeck.

Pilgram Marbeck, engineer, author and preacher, was born about the end of the 15th century and died in or near Augsburg about 1547. He was brot up a Roman Catholic but turned to Luther's Reformation about 1523. From this he turned because "where God's Word was preached in the Lutheran way a fleshly freedom followed in its trail".

His skill as an engineer saved Marbeck from many persecutions. His religious views were so pronounced, however, that even his skill in practical affairs could not stay the persecution, especially when he began to

persuade the clergy. The publication of two books on his views landed him in prison. At his own request he was admitted to a disputation with Bucer. A record of this disputation has been kept. Marbeck defended his position in 28 articles with rare skill and logical acumen. But it was all useless. The council was opposed to him and therefore he was banished. He went to Ulm and then to Augsburg where he became the guiding spirit of the Anabaptist movement of the entire region.

In 1542 he published another book: "Vermahnung, auch ganz klarer, gründlicher und unwidersprechlicher Bericht zu wahrer christlicher ewig beständiger Brüder-Vereinigung." This contained an exposition of his views on sin, hereditary sin, baptism, divine worship, magistracy and the Lord's Supper.

The sending of a copy of this book to a follower of Schwenkfeld led to a fruitless and acrimonious dispute with the latter on the question of water baptism. Aside from this regrettable incident, Marbeck led a highly respected life and, for his time, had an unusually long career for an Anabaptist leader.

J. Dr. Balthasar Hubmaier.

Dr. Balthasar Hubmaeier was born of poor parents near Augsburg about 1480. He studied at Augsburg and at Freiburg under the famous Dr. Eck.

Hubmaier was reared in polemical surroundings

and showed the effect of his training. He possessed a strong pulpit ability. After the completion of his studies he held a professorship of theology at Ingolstadt and later the prorectorship in the same institution. A year later he became pastor of the cathedral at Regensburg, where he assisted in the uprising against the Jews, who were hated because of the way in which they exacted "usury". He was made priest of the new chapel which was erected at this place. This chapel became a place of pilgrimage because of the supposed miracles wrot by the image of the Holy Mary placed there. The nuisance arising in connection with these "miracles" did not appeal to Hubmaier and he protested. This action caused his removal to Waldshut where he became priest, and he became a popular priest because he remained a conscientious Roman Catholic and performed his duties so faithfully. There was a growing suspicion, however, on his part that the Catholic doctrine was not the highest good. He began reading the Bible, especially the Pauline epistles, and found himself inclining to emphasize the Holy Scriptures as the final authority and best guide. He probably also learned to respect the cause of the Reformers, especially as he continued his studies of the Bible. When this conviction had once gained ground in his thinking, it did not take long for Hubmaier to come out as an open reformer. He found himself in agreement with Zwingli's earlier views on

baptism, etc., and seems to have remained loyal to him until the latter changed his views for prudential reasons.

The Roman Catholic authorities, both ecclesiastical and civil, soon brot all their powers to bear upon his destruction. After Waldshut went over to the Reformers, Hubmaier practically became the dictator of the religious and, to a large extent, the political policies of the place.

About this time Hubmaier came into contact with Anabaptist leaders such as Grebel, Manz and Reublin. The latter baptized him on Easter day of 1525. This aroused the animosity of Zwingli who succeeded in getting control of the magistrate and thus forcing Hubmaier out.

It seems quite possible that Hubmaier had permitted himself to be influenced unduly by Münzer and hence allowed himself to undertake matters which cast unjust reflections upon the Anabaptist cause and did unnecessary harm to his influence as a leader.

As a result of the controversy with Zwingli, Hubmaier wrote two books: "Von dem christlichen Tauf der Gläubigen" and: "Ein Gespräch von der Kindertauf." These were both published in 1526. "The essence of baptism," he maintained, "is the expression of personal faith and of the obligation which that faith imposes." He rejected the arguments deduced from

the New Testament in favor of infant baptism and argued that "the practice was actually forbidden inasmuch as it falls under Matt. 15:13, which prohibits idolatry. On the other hand the baptism that proceeds from conscious and acknowledged faith is the necessary condition for the existence of a Christian community."

Hubmaier was in the habit of closing his addresses or paragraphs in his writings with, "The truth is immortal." He frequently offered to discuss with his opponents questions on which they differed and always showed himself willing to be fair-minded, e. g. in a letter to Zwingli on the subject of Baptism he writes: "If I err, I will gladly retract; if Master Ulrich errs, he should not be ashamed to forsake his error, **for the truth will ultimately conquer him.**" He frankly admitted that he might err, being a man, but declared that he could not be a heretic because he was willing to be taught better by any one.

He sent repeated requests to the authorities. In the third of these he admonished them to judge justly. He maintained that all customs and traditions must be subject to the Bible on this point and charged the authorities with partisanship in meting out justice. He intimated that the lack of confidence toward them on the part of the common people is due to the fact that their rule had too often forced the latter to deal contrary to their consciences and pointed out that men

must and will continue to claim that one must obey God more than man. (Die dritte Erbietung Balthasar Hubmaiers an den Rat zu Schaffhausen. September, 1524. Signed, Dr. Balthasar Hubmaier von Fridberg, Pfarrer zu Waldshut. For copy of this document cf. Loserth, Dr. Balhasar Hubmaier, pp. 196-200.)

Hubmaier looked upon the Mosaic code as a kind of court of final appeal.

His pleas that his former appeals be heeded are pathetic and his protest that he is innocent in the matter of the rebellion at Waldshut is fervent. He wanted an opportunity of pleading for himself in public and agreed not to ask more of his slanderers than that they better themselves, altho he was willing to accept the death penalty for himself if found to be in the wrong.

When Hubmaier was tried for his rejection of infant baptism, he confessed that his early doubts about the Scriptural authority of this rite were confirmed by Zwingli, Dr. Bastian, Oecolampadius and others. This is a point of considerable interest for our present purpose. We have had frequent traces of this fact and will have occasion to refer to it again in connec tion with the more specific discussion of the various men as to their probable attitude on the question of Christ's Headship of the Church.

Hubmaier, in some respects, reminds one of Savanarola, e. g. in his apparent inconsistencies when

subjected to great suffering. Under such circumstances he seems to have yielded on all points except in his attitude toward infant baptism and his position regarding the sacraments which meant nothing to him. This gave his enemies an opportunity to spread all kinds of reports as to the "recantations", and yet made them secretly very much dissatified with the results which they had obtained and consequently put them into a frame of mind which would make them ill-disposed toward any leniency with so troublesome a character.

Hubmaier was ahead of his time and, tho he seems to have looked upon the situation philosophically for a while, the time came when his endurance, and perhaps also his patience, gave way and he became logically inconsistent in some respects, but on the whole he stood up heroically for the truth as he saw it, and he saw it more clearly than most of his critics, at least, he came more nearly living what he saw. He was one of the most successful teachers of the Anabaptists so far as the number of accessions to the movement is concerned. His inconsistencies, real and apparent, are to be deplored, altho they put him into a less unfavorable light than Zwingli's cynical criticisms of them do the latter. The burning of Hubmaier was another blot on the name of the Church which professed to be guided by the Christ whom Hubmaier tried to follow honestly, tho imperfectly.

K. Eitel Hans Langenmantel.

This man was a member of one of the oldest and most distinguished patrician families in Augsburg. His father was one of the most illustrious citizens of that city during the first half of the 16th century. He seems to have had many educational advantages, including those of travel. After his return from abroad he took up an enthusiastic defense of Zwingli's doctrine of the Lord's Supper.

In 1527 Langenmantel joined the Anabaptists and was baptized by Hans Hut in March of that year. He became one of the most influential leaders of the movement. This was probably due largely to his social position. He had been a pupil of Denck but was not the equal of his teacher, either in learning or in philosophical ability.

He rendered faithful services in the ministry to which he was soon elected. His conception of faith was: "Der Glaube ist ein geistig innerlich geschäftiges Regen der Seele—ein Leben derselben im Göttlichen, das uns fruchtbar macht in allerlei guten Werken." This conception did not coincide with those of many leaders of the established churches, but Langenmantel did not hesitate to publish it and others in several pamphlets. He also reacted strongly against the commercial tendencies of the Lutheran clergy. He accused them of avarice and took the position that

ministers ought not to be paid at all. This was due largely to the fact that so many clergymen looked for the best paying parish rather than the parish offering the greater opportunity for service.

He opposed infant baptism because he considered it an error either to impute faith to the infant or to accept the faith of the parents for the child. He had little patience with the theological slight-of-hand which was often used in defense of infant baptism. He demanded to know how one could baptize where faith in the preached Gospel was impossible and where there was no responsible mind to have the kind of faith which Jesus demanded. He believed that infants were saved by the grace of God.

Langenmantel wrote a number of hymns and rendered good services as an evangelist. The Church at Augsburg grew rapidly under his leadership. He held meetings whenever and wherever it was safe to do so and never seems to have wanted for an audience. The growth of the "Community" provoked persecution and many of his members were imprisoned. In 1527 he was also captured but the influence of his family secured his freedom on condition that he leave Augsburg. This he did but was captured by a marauding party in 1528 and was executed. (For the account of his execution and for his last prayer cf. Märtyrerspiegel, Part II, p. 14.) Thru his death the Anabaptists of Southern Germany lost another of their best leaders

and it made many of the people give up hope while others became desperate.

L. Dirk and Obbe Philipps.

These two men were brothers who were born at Leuwarden, Friesland about the beginning of the 16th century. Little is known of Obbe, sometimes also written Ubbo, Ubbe, Olbe, etc., but he is supposed to have been a mechanic. Thru the preaching of Melchior Hoffmann, who visited Friesland on his tours, Obbe was converted from Romanism to the Anabaptist cause and became a preacher. (For an estimate of Obbe Philipps on Melchior Hoffmann see van der Smissen, Geschichte und Glaubenslehre der Mennoniten, p. 40.) He did not share Hoffmann's extravagant views, however, nor did he sympathize with the Münster movement. He actively opposed both. He seems to have been of a quiet nature, disposed to foster the growth of a new Church in which those who were really in earnest about their Christianity might live according to the dictates of their consciences. He was instrumental in the conversion of his brother, Dirk, and, according to some reports, ordained Menno Simon to the ministry. Later he returned to the fold of the Roman Catholic Church, or at least withdrew himself sufficiently from the Anabaptist (then Mennonite) cause to take no more than a middle position between the two religious bodies. There is some dif-

ference of opinion as to just why Obbe Philipps took this step. Vos (Menno Simons) thinks that Obbe was disappointed in his expectations and discouraged with conditions as they developed. Just why this was true is not so evident, but the writer ventures to suggest that Obbe's lack of preparation for the kind of work and responsibility which arose with the development of the new movement may have had something to do with the taking of this step by him.

Dirk Philipps had quite a different career. He was born in 1504. Where he received his education is not known, but he had the reputation of being the "best educated among the Baptist-minded of his day" and he is known to have been well versed in Latin and Greek. He, too, refused to ally himself with the Münster movement. He preferred to build up a quiet Baptist-minded community.

Dirk Philipps became both an efficient co-laborer and an intimate friend of Menno Simon. The two seem to have complemented each other very nicely both as to ability and temperament. Philipps was the more scholarly of the two and was also Menno's superior in the "knowledge of the sciences", but he lacked Menno's practical insight. Philipps was a very earnest and enthusiastic man and was inclined to be puritanic. This tendency was happily counter-acted by Menno's disposition toward greater mildness. This difference of disposition showed itself most clearly in the vexing

question of excommunication. Menno succeeded in holding Philipps in moderation as long as he lived. After Menno's death Philipps did less satisfactory work along this line because of an increased harshness on his part. On the other hand, Philipps was a great help to Menno in that he furnished the latter a great and good-hearted friend whom Menno sorely needed in times of persecution and discouragement.

Dirk Philipps was very effective in his work as an itinerant pastor-preacher in many parts of Northwestern Germany. He added to the value of this work by the writing of his Enchiridion (A Handbook of the Christian Doctrine, etc.). This book seems to have had a large influence and is of value today because of the insight which it gives into the doctrines of the early Mennonites. This book passed thru many editions in Europe (1564, 1578, 1579, 1600 and 1627) and has also been published in the United States.

M. Gillis von Aachen.

Gillis von Aachen, or Gillis van Acken, was also born about the beginning of the 16th century. In 1525 he was appointed chaplain at Hoiningen (Haehningen) and began to preach for the Anabaptists at Limburg in 1531. The Münster movement seems to have had a fascination for him. While on his way to that city he was captured but was released again and seems to have worked as an itinerant preacher until 1542

when Menno Simon ordained him as an elder. Gillis continued his work with much success, baptizing large numbers of people. He is said to have baptized more martyrs, whose records are found in the Martyrs' Mirror, than any other elder of the Baptist-minded.

In 1552 Gillis was excommunicated on the charge of immorality, but was reinstated two years later following a confession which seems to have been sincere. This reinstatement caused the Mennonites much trouble, however, because of their strenuous insistence upon a consistent life.

In 1557 Gillis was captured while preaching. Fearing death he recanted, promising to take up the cause of Roman Catholicism wherever he had been preaching. He did not keep this promise, however, and was soon captured again and beheaded.

Tileman van Braght refused to enter the account of Gillis' martyrdom in the Martyrs' Mirror because of his recantation.

N. Leonert Bouvens.

The subject of this sketch was also an ardent supporter of Menno Simon. He was elected Elder by the Church at Emden. His wife objected to this election because she feared that his enthusiasm would cause him to fall into the hands of the persecutors. She wrote to Menno Simon imploring him to use his in-

fluence in altering the action of the Church. This Menno declined to do. Bouvens accepted the call and served the cause very enthusiastically and successfully. Within a short time he had baptized more than 10,000 people. This fact has been discovered from records kept by himself, in which the names, places and dates of the baptisms are given.

Bouvens strongly emphasized consistent Christian living and therefore favored the use of the "ban" (excommunication). At first he was moderate in his interpretation of the "ban", favoring it merely as a kind of defense against the "Schwarmgeister" (probably referring to the Münsterites and kindred spirits) but later he became very extreme in his position. He is accused of having intimidated Menno Simon and Dirk Philipps so that they also took a more extreme position than they were inclined to do at first. If this is true, Bouvens was probably responsible for a serious split in the Mennonite body in 1557. His ability and enthusiasm were of great value to the cause which he represented and it is to be deplored that he allowed his experiences to increase his puritanical tendencies. If he had remained with his original position that the "ban" should be used as a fruit of the Gospel, to build up, not to break down, and then against the "spoilt members" rather than the weak, Bouvens might have become one of the most powerful leaders of the early Mennonite Church.

O. Menno Simon.

The subject of this sketch was born at Witmarsum, West Friesland, Holland. The exact date of his birth is still a matter of conjecture and, as that question is of little significance for the purposes of this thesis, suffice it to say that Menno Simon was born sometime during or near the year 1496.

His parents were probably farmers. He was educated for the Roman priesthood and began serving at Pingjum at the age of 28. Of the experiences in this pastorate he writes: "Two other persons also officiated in the same station. The one was my pastor and was well learned in part; the other succeeded me; both had read the Scriptures partially, but I had not touched them during my life, for I feared that if I should read them they would mislead me. Behold, such a stupid preacher was I for nearly two years. In the first year thereafter the thought occurred to me, as often as I handled the bread and wine in the mass, that they were not the flesh and blood of the Lord. I thought that it was the suggestion of the devil in order that he might lead me away from faith. I confessed it often, sighed and prayed, yet I was unable to free myself from the thought. At length I resolved that I would examine the New Testament actively. I had not proceeded far therein ere I discovered that we had been deceived. My conscience, which was

troubled on account of the sacramental bread, aforementioned, was soon greatly relieved, without any human aid or advice; though I was encouraged by Luther in the belief that human authority cannot bind to eternal death."

The death of one Sicke Snyder, who was beheaded because he had been re-baptized, led to further thinking on the part of Menno. He consulted in turn with his Roman Catholic pastor, with Luther, with Bucer and with Bullinger and received different answers from them all on the question of infant baptism. He says of this experience: "Having thus observed that authors varied greatly among themselves, each following his own opinion, I became convinced that we were deceived in relation to infant baptism."

He next went to the village of his birth, Witmarsum, where he labored with much display of enthusiasm but with an inward unrest because, as he accused himself afterward, he was acting the hypocrite.

Soon after this representatives of the Münsterites visited the vicinity and succeeded in gaining a number of followers. Menno combatted them but admits that he was weakened in his efforts because "he did that which he knew was not right". His activities against the Münsterites soon gained for him the reputation, "dass er ihnen den Mund fein stopfen könne". At one time Menno would have prided himself on such a reputation, but at this time his conscience had been

awakened and therefore this praise became to him as a thorn in the flesh. He had become conscious of sin and began to pray fervently that God should keep him from making himself the partaker of other men's sins.

When the Münsterites had gained a considerable following the authorities attacked about 300 of them at Oude Klooster, near Witmarsum, and executed most of them, including Menno's brother. The effect of this may be seen from Menno's own words: "After this had transpired, the blood of the slain, although it was shed in error, grieved me so sorely that I could not endure it. I could find no rest in my soul. I reflected upon my carnal, sinful life, my hypocritical doctrine and idolatry, in which I appeared daily under the appearance of godliness. I saw that these zealous children willingly gave their lives and their estates, though they were in error, for their doctrine and faith. And I was one of those who had discovered some of their abominations, and yet, I myself remained satisfied with my unrestrained life and my known defilements. I wished only to live comfortably and without the cross of Christ. Thus reflecting upon these things my soul was so grieved that I could no longer endure it. I thought to myself—I, miserable man, what shall I do? If I continue in this way and live not agreeably to the Word of the Lord, according to the knowledge of truth which I have obtained; if I do not rebuke to the best of my ability the hypocricy, the impenitent,

carnal life, the perverted baptism, the Lord's Supper and false worship of God, which the learned teach; if I, through bodily fear, do not show them the true foundation of truth, neither use all my powers to direct the wandering flock, who would gladly do their duty if they knew it, to the true pastures of Christ—Oh, how shall their shed blood, though shed in error, rise against me at the judgment of the Almighty and pronounce sentence against my poor, miserable soul." This experience led him to a deeper self-examination and to an open renunciation of his former life and a denunciation of the practices of the leaders who did not teach the poor people the truth. He continued to oppose the Münsterites but not in the same spirit.

About a year later six to eight young men of high character came to Menno while he was "secretly exercising himself in the Word of God" and appealed to him to become their leader. The principal emphasis of their plea was the need of spiritual leadership. This call affected Menno deeply (cf. Works of Menno Simon, Part I, pp. 5, 6). After deep searching of soul he finally accepted the call because of the great need and took up his difficult task with an earnest determination to serve the Lord faithfully, come what might.

He did not have to wait long for persecutions, but seems to have met them heroically. The longer one reads in his works the more one feels that Menno looked upon these persecutions as a kind of desert for his

former life. This caused a tinge of asceticism to appear in his life which sometimes bordered on other worldliness but it never affected him sufficiently to entangle him in any Chiliastic or Apocalyptic alliances.

By nature Menno seems to have been of a kindly disposition. This was a good trait for a man in his position. As it was, the bitterness of persecution and the heartache, due to misunderstandings within the movement, sometimes caused a certain gruffness to appear in his attitude toward others. Ellenberger says of Menno: "Fest und zähe wie sein Geburtsland, dort in der Nähe der Nordsee, sehen wir ihn in seinem späteren Leben." It was fortunate that he had such a nature, and more fortunate that it was tempered with the spirit of kindness in spite of the sore trials to which he did not always succumb.

Six years after Menno left the Roman Church a decree was issued forbidding any one from helping him and offering 100 Carolus Guilders for his capture. After this Menno saw few days of safety.

The frugal and God-fearing lives of the Anabaptists appealed so strongly to the Countess Anna that she sheltered them. This helped Menno for a while, but the authorities continually confused the peaceful subjects of the Countess with the Münsterites and therefore forced her to persecute them.

The nature of the persecutions against the Ana-

baptists may be seen from the following summary of orders issued by the authorities against the "Wederdooperen". No one was to ask pardon for them when they had been condemned to death; any one leading to the capture of Anabaptists was to receive one-third of their possessions; no one might conceal things belonging to them; any one taken as an Anabaptist was to be killed, even tho he confessed; all unbaptized children were to be "baptized" and the names of the parents given to the Roman Catholic priest of the respective parish.

It does not take a very strong imagination to see why these peace-loving people believed that the Church, founded by Jesus Christ and named after Him, should not be ruled by carnally-minded men who made brute force and not the will of God their shibboleth!

Under these conditions Menno built so well that the movement, which had been started in Southern Germany and Switzerland and then carried down the Rhine by fleeing members, was called after him. Tho fiercely persecuted he lived to be over 60 years of age. During the latter years of his life he and his family were in misery and want much of the time; he was often in danger for his life and sometimes came near despairing, but he kept on working. He felt his hardships keenly but not so keenly as the sufferings caused him by the serious misunderstandings within the

movement itself. This was due largely to the extreme views which Leonert Bouvens held regarding excommunication and was intensified by the fact that he succeeded in getting Dirk Philipps and Menno to take his part for the sake of peace. Their conciliatory attitude was interpreted as an intimidation and they consequently lost their influence to a large degree.

Menno died January 13, 1559, at Wuestenfelde. This place was later destroyed by the "Thirty Years' War" and no one knows where the burial place of the great leader is to be found. A memorial was erected to him at Witmarsum in 1877 which bears the inscription of his motto: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." I Cor. 3:11.

Menno's doctrinal position was that of the movement of the quiet Baptist-minded as a whole, except on two points, namely the incarnation and the "ban". The latter, as we have seen, was influenced by the radical position of Leonert Bouvens and the former was probably due to impressions received from Melchior Hoffmann at a time when Menno was too little grounded in the Scriptures to settle the matter calmly, especially because his reaction from the practices of the Roman Church came about the same time. He believed that Jesus had simply passed thru Mary without having received any of her properties. He seems to have felt that in admitting the receipt of any-

thing from Mary there was danger of permitting a suggestion to enter that Jesus was sinful. Perhaps the reaction from the crass practices of the Roman Church may have influenced him also. Whatever may have been the cause, he does not seem to have urged this point very much and the movement as a whole certainly never accepted it.

Menno did his best work as a preacher and a pastor. He was not primarily a theologian and entered theological controversies with much hesitation. When he had once begun, however, he carried them on with considerable fervor. On occasion he expressed himself with more force than elegance. In this he did not exceed others whose names are more prominent in the annals of history, but his followers are not proud of the fact that their leader should have yielded to the "Zeitgeist" in this respect. His peculiar temptation seems to have been on the question of baptism, which was naturally a cause for provocation under existing conditions. Positively stated, his views on baptism were that it is a sign and witness of an inner renewing, which comes thru faith and, since this depends upon the free decision of the individual, no one who has not reached his years of discretion is ready for baptism. His views on other points of doctrine will be treated in a later chapter as their relation to his probable views on Christ's Headship of the Church makes them relevant.

If Menno could have written pastoral epistles instead of controversial pamphlets, the writer feels that his contribution to the Church and the world would have been much more acceptable and valuable. Nevertheless Menno Simon has made no mean contribution and his work has doubtlessly not come to its full recognition as yet. Portions of the Anabaptist movement who turned from him on the question of the "ban", later adopted his name and others, not of the denomination bearing his name, have become increasingly interested in his work.

One of the striking features about this man was the fact that he became so proficient in his knowledge of the Scriptures, as his writings show. This was characteristic of the members of the movement as a whole and no doubt accounts for the persistency of those who had once joined it and for the emphasis which they placed upon consistently following Christ in one's daily life.

* * *

There may be room for considerable difference of opinion as to the probable attitude which some of the foregoing leaders might take on the various points involved in a discussion on the question of Christ's Headship of the Church, if they were living today, but there can be no doubt as to the fact that they looked upon Christ as the Head of the true Church. The fact that they were possessed of this idea beyond the

point of mere theory or profession made them misfits in the established order of things but it also made them willing to sacrifice their opportunities for worldly gain and renown, and even the enjoyment of the inalienable human rights.

CHAPTER IV

WAYS IN WHICH THE CONCEPTIONS OF THESE LEADERS REGARDING CHRIST'S HEADSHIP OF THE CHURCH FOUND EXPRESSION

In dealing with this wide-spread and growing longing for deep and personal communion with God we have felt that men and women, who en masse were usually looked upon with either pity or contempt by the theological leaders of their day, were struggling to give expression to large and noble conceptions. To them "the real matter of the Reformation was not the correction of views but the correction of real religion, the practical relations between God and the soul." (Forsythe, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 191.) This is why so many of them were dissatisfied with the later attitudes of the leading Reformers and turned away from those whom they had commenced to follow so gladly and so hopefully. They cared for no doctrine which could not be lived and consequently were misunderstood in a day when the theological leaders placed so much emphasis upon the verbal statement of religious beliefs. They made religion everything and took Christ seriously while many of

their persecutors used religion as a convenient cloak to be put on when occasion demanded it.

A time of such vast contrasts and of such portentious transitions is naturally also a time of new beginnings. This applies both to modes of thinking and to expressions of the same. Owing to the degeneration in the established churches, a new beginning had to be made in many respects and hence it is not surprising that many experiences of the Apostolic Church were repeated during the decades immediately succeeding the formal opening of the Reformation by Luther in 1519. The Anabaptists and early Mennonites were not ready for a system of theology at this time. They were just having the experiential birth-pangs of a new church life and needed all their strength to survive this ordeal. Hence it is not strange that we find statements which seem crude and unscientific, especially when we remember that these people were goaded to an expression of their views by theologians who had had considerable training in philosophical subtleties, but who lacked the spiritual experience of their victims. For these reasons it is necessary to consider the lives of these people rather than the verbal expressions on matters of doctrine, in order to get at their real points of view. Let us remember that these people belonged to a spiritual movement which had re-apprehended Christian faith thru its study of the Bible and its insistence upon a return to

the kind of life found in the Apostolic Church. "It must be observed that in Christianity thus defined and thus operative the person of Christ always stands forth as unique, supreme, divine, redemptive, and directive. 'Ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia' ". (Encyclop. of Rel. and Ethics. Article, Jesus Christ, by W. Douglas Mac Kenzie.) Hence we are not surprised to find a leader like Menno Simon expressing himself as follows: "I desire nothing else, before God, who created me, than to deal plainly with the living voice before everyone as one willing to be overcome by the Spirit of Christ, or to overcome; for my desire is that I and many with me be saved; hence it is unnecessary to use the sword against me; if I have not the truth, I desire with all my heart to be instructed in it; but if I have, then you do not persecute me but Him who is the truth, Christ Jesus." (Complete Works of Menno Simon, I, p. 214.) Such modes of expression received all too little attention on the part of the leaders of the Church at that time. That is why history has had to be written as it has, but that is no reason for undervaluing such expressions as an indication of where men stood on doctrinal points.

The conscientious followers of the Sermon on the Mount often failed to express themselves exactly as did the followers of the Nicene Creed, but that fact does not give us the privilege to pass superficial judgments on what they really thot; it challen-

ges us to a deeper study of the underlying causes of the apparent differences between the two classes of followers. "It is impossible for any one, whether he be a student of history or no, to fail to notice the difference of both form and content between the Sermon on the Mount and the Nicene Creed. The Sermon on the Mount is the promulgation of a new law of conduct; it assumes beliefs rather than formulates them; the theological conceptions which underlie it belong to the ethical rather than the speculative side of theology; metaphysics are wholly absent. The Nicene Creed is a statement partly of historic facts and partly of dogmatic inferences; the metaphysical terms which it contains would probably have been unintelligible to the first disciples; ethics have no place in it. The one belongs to a world of Syrian peasants, the other to a world of Greek philosophers." (Dr. Edwin Hatch, The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages Upon the Christian Church, p. 1.) The fundamental implications of the foregoing contrast also apply to differences of expression found at the time of the Reformation between the theologians and the people who wanted a religious conviction which could express itself in life. It was not, at that time, a question as to **whether** Jesus Christ had founded the Church (nominally at least all would have agreed to that); it was rather a question of **why** He had done so. The Anabaptists would have answered the latter question by saying that Jesus

Christ had founded the Church in order to have a Community (Gemeinde) of spiritually-minded men and women; their enemies answered the same question, in fact if not in theory, by maintaining that the Church was founded to be a politico-religious world power.

Keeping in mind the facts pointed out in the foregoing, we are ready to trace out more specifically the conceptions of the early Mennonite leaders and their Anabaptist predecessors regarding Christ's Headship of the church. This will be done under the following general heads:

A. Thru their conceptions regarding Christ's Person.

B. Thru their conceptions regarding Christ's Work.

C. Thru their conceptions regarding the Church.

A. Conceptions of Anabaptist Leaders Regarding Christ's Person.

"As far as Christology is concerned, it is the gradual unfolding of the central fact that Jesus Christ is from the first accepted by the Church as the incarnate Son of God, the redeemer of man by the cross, the ruler of our experience by His Spirit" (Dr. W. Douglas MacKenzie). With such a plan in mind one may

say that these Anabaptist leaders looked upon Jesus Christ as the Son of God who came into this world in order to save men from sin. They conceived of Him as having been with the Father before the beginning of the world; that He came into the world as the first-born son of Mary; that He was crucified and, having died, He was raised again and did ascend into heaven from whence He will come again as the Judge of the whole world. They conceived of Him as still the same who was with the Father from the beginning and then lived upon the earth in order to carry out the will of the Father regarding the redemption of man. (For a copy of the original text upon which the foregoing summary is based, taken from a book which was published in 1664, see Appendix IV.)

The question as to how such a transaction could be possible was met by them by simply accepting the Scriptural accounts without attempting to fathom the mysteries which these accounts present or to solve the problems which they raise. This need not surprise us, however, for we have already reminded ourselves that these men stood in a period of transitions and in a time of new beginnings. Later Confessions of Faith are greatly amplified, showing that the conceptions which were obtained during and soon after the great transition period of the Reformation were not sufficient to meet the questions which naturally arose from a more highly organized condition of the Communities

(Gemeinden) and from the leisure to think, combined with the rapidly rising educational facilities which stimulated such thinking. The leaders with whom we are concerned were not unmindful of the problems which arose later. They were not ready to meet them in such a definite way, however, as to give to their posterity a clear or satisfying answer as to their solution. The conditions surrounding them naturally bred a kind of timidity which is not altogether to be condemned because undue boldness is apt to play more havoc in such delicate matters than an anxious hesitation even tho the latter provokes an impatience which too often makes for divisions. We need not wonder that these early leaders were careful, however, when we learn that as late as 1763 Cornelis Ris, who had been requested to draw up a summary of all former Confessions of Faith, was guided in this work by very carefully formulated rules among which we find the following: "Die dritte Regel: **Behutsam von den Geheimnissen sich auszudrücken, worüber gutgesinnte Gemüter bisweilen Zweifel hegen.**" Then, referring to the Trinity, he says: "Ich bin für mich selber in der Lehre von der heiligen Dreyeinigkeit wohl gegründet, und hege eine demütige Ehrerbietung für diese Wahrheit vom ersten Range; dennoch bin ich davon sehr kurz, und habe so vorsichtig, und mit den Worten der Heiligen Schrift so genau übereinstimmend mich auszudrücken bestrebt, wie mir nur möglich gewesen;

weil ich aus eigner Erfahrung weiss, wie furchtsam zarte Gemüter, denen bey ihrer Erziehung oder sonsten andere Grundsätze eingeflösset, in diesem Punkt sind, und wie schwer es fällt, gründlich ihre Einwürfe aufzulösen; imgleichen wie oft sie Anstoss nehmen an einigen menschlichen Redensarten, durch die Unvorsichtigkeit solcher Personen, denen es an aufgeklärten Begriffen fehlt." (Die Glaubenslehre der wahren Mennoniten oder Taufgesinnten aus deren öffentlichen Glaubensbekenntnissen zusammen gezogen durch Cornelis Ris.) Lest we forget, such "Behutsamkeit" (circumspection) has not become unknown, or perhaps even unnecessary, lo, these many years since Cornelis Ris wrote, to say nothing of the time which has elapsed since men, bent upon controversy, drew forth statements from other men who wanted to **live** their faith rather than to argue about it! This fact should make us less critical because so little was produced and more appreciative of the quality which that little was able to show when occasion demanded.

In taking up the views of individual leaders we find that they agree concerning those matters which make for an accentuation of the application of Christian truth and sometimes differ widely on purely speculative points.

Hans Denck says comparatively little about Jesus Christ. For him the "inner voice" is of prime import-

ance and therefore his expressions lead one to think more definitely concerning the Holy Spirit. This does not mean, however, that Denck did not emphasize faith in Christ. For him "Christ has come from God as a sunbeam from the sun . . . Christ is the Son of the Highest and all good men are the children of God". "Men are inclined toward sin, but there is also a 'something' within me which opposes this tendency toward sin. This 'something' is from God. This, and not the so-called 'faith' which is nothing more than taking for granted certain doctrines, is what leads me to a right relationship with God. Hence I conclude that this 'something' in me is Christ, of whom the Scriptures testify that He is the Son of the Highest." He also said that he conceived of Jesus Christ as having lived eternally and that He would remain the Mediator of all men for all time. He also conceived of all true Christians as being one with God in Christ, or, as he says in another place, "God and man are individuals, but they are bound together through Jesus Christ who became man." Denck further maintained that "the love of God could not have shown itself more clearly than it did through Jesus of Nazareth". He also conceived of Christ as having been sinless, for he says: "Christ never stumbled, He was never at variance with God, although born in time according to the flesh, and subjected to all of the weaknesses of men, except sin." Denck, in speaking of salvation declared that "all

those who are saved must be saved through Christ."

Taken by themselves these statements suggest many phases of a well developed system of theology, but when one takes them with their context one finds that in Denck's mind they are primarily suggestions of what he thinks of Him upon whom he depends for power to lead a consistent life and for light in thinking of what he ought to be and do. Denck was a mystic, but one who wanted the suggestions of the "inner voice" to be converted into the kind of men and women who would carry out the wishes of God as represented in Jesus Christ. Hence we find Denck frequently referring to the attitude of Jesus on certain points of discussion, e. g. he says: "Christ, who was Love, said nothing about church rules and ceremonies." This settled the matter for Denck. Not that he was an iconoclast in the strict sense of the word, but he felt that a thing that Jesus Christ had said nothing about was not of sufficient importance for the Church to lay such emphasis on; especially when the Church seemed so anxious to make very little of a number of things concerning which Christ had expressed Himself quite clearly and even emphatically.

Denck was not by nature inclined to rebel and therefore concerned himself comparatively little about the idea of law, especially in the sense in which it was used in the Roman Catholic Church of his day. He

believed that the teachings of Christ do not stand in opposition to the law, but that they contain the higher development of the same thot. This, to Denck, was an inspiration to live near to Christ; he felt as tho he had risen to a new height thru Christ and that the "observances" of former days had lost their importance. This does not mean that Denck thot himself above these, as weak or carnally-minded men have sometimes done. It was not license which he sought but liberty in the higher sense and for him this liberty came thru Christ, the Son of God, become man for a definite purpose and now residing again with God as the eternal Mediator of all men. This was a very real matter for Denck and he had little time, and perhaps as little inclination to worry himself about the speculative or metaphysical problems connected with such conceptions. In fact, he seems to have had a kind of suspicion that when men, in his day when there was such a dire lack of Christ-like living, spent their time and energies with the merely speculative side of the Christ, they were probably in need of a reminder that that was not the most important side.

The two great words in Denck's theology were love and faith, and they both centered in Christ. This is quite important in an estimate of his Christology and goes farther in giving us an idea of what Jesus Christ meant to Hans Denck than a skillfully worked-out statement of theology might.

Dirk Philipps prefaces his chapter on the Incarnation (Enchiridion, pp. 100-125) with the following quotations: "The Word became flesh, John 1:14a"; "That which was from the beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld, and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life, and the Life was manifested, I John 1:2a" and "Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifested in the flesh, I Tim. 3:16b." These quotations suggest where he stood on the fact of the incarnation. His quotations were evidently made with the purpose of making it clear to the enemies that he believed in the incarnated Christ, (for it was part of the mission of this confession to refute the charges of enemies that the Mennonites did not believe in Christ). The fact that the selection seems somewhat strained and not in conformity with all of the modern rules of exposition is of little concern to us in this connection.

After a detailed exposition of their belief regarding the incarnation of Christ, Philipps sums up the matter as follows: "Darum so ist zum letzten unser Glauben und herzgründliche Bekenntnis vor Gott dem Herrn, vor seinen Engeln, vor allen rechten Christen und vor einem jeglichen, dass Jesus Christus ist der eigene natürliche, eingebohrene, erstgebohrene Sohn des lebendigen Gottes, wahrhaftig GOtt und GOttes Sohn, (Joh. 1.a 3.c. Heb. 1.a. Mich. 5.a.) ein wahrhaftiger Mensch

und des Menschen Sohn, GOtt und GOttes Sohn, von Ewigkeit bey GOtt, und in GOtt, (von welchem er gebohren ist) von Ewigkeit Röm. 8.a.) Aber ein Mensch in der letzten Zeit nach der Verheissung des Vaters, durch seine eigene gutwillige Gelassenheit, Gehorsamkeit, Verkleinerung seiner selbst, Ablegung seiner göttlichen Gestalt und Annehmung einer menschlichen und knechtlichen Gestalt, aus überflüssiger Liebe geworden; darum ist er auch der rechte einige Mittler zwischen GOtt und den Menschen, denn er steht recht in dem Mittel. II Tim. 2.b. Nämlich er ist nicht allein GOtt und GOttes Sohn, sondern er ist auch ein Mensch und des Menschen Sohn; dem Vater ist er gleich nach seiner Gottheit, aber uns Menschen ist er gleich nach seiner Menschheit, ausgenommen der Sünde und alle sündliche und irdische Art unseres Fleisches; denn er ist der andere Adam (I Cor. 15.e), der Herr selber von dem Himmel, sein Fleisch hat er für uns in den Tod gegeben und seinen Geist in die Hände seines Vaters befohlen; ja, dass die Sonne in dem Tod Christi verdunkelt (Marc 15.d. Matt. 27.e.) und doch nicht vergangen ist, scheinet wohl zu bezeichnen, und mag nicht unförmlich darauf gedeutet werden (dieweil doch GOtt in der Schrift durch die Sonne abgebildet, und die Sonne genannt wird, Buch d. Weish. 5.a. Ps. 19.a), dass der Glanz der Herrlichkeit GOttes Jesus Christus nach dem Fleisch gestorben ist (Offenb. 1.d), und gleichwohl nach dem Geist lebet, als er selber

sagt: "Ich bin lebendig, und war todt, und siehe, ich lebe von Ewigkeit zu Ewigkeit." Heb. 1.a.

"Drey Stunden ist die Sonne verdunkelt gewesen wider ihre Art, und doch nicht vergangen; drey Tage und drey Nächte ist Jonas im Wallfisch gewesen, und doch lebendig geblieben über die Natur; wiederum ist er am dritten Tage von den Todten auferstanden, (1 Cor. 15.a) und nach dem Geist lebendig gemachet, über die menschliche Natur: Also ist das edle Weizenkörnlein Jesus Christus in die Erde gefallen, (Joh. 12.c) und hat durch sein Leiden und Tod viel seligmachende Frucht gebracht, (Tit. 3.a) also hat der getreue und einige gute Hirt Jesus Christus nach und aus dem Befehl seines himmlischen Vaters, selber sein Leben von ihm selbst gelassen, und wiederum zu ihm genommen. Joh. 10.b. Also ist das unschuldige Lamm Gottes, Jesus Christus, welches die Sünden der Welt hinwegnimmt, seinem himmlischen Vater zu einem süssen Geruch, aber uns zur ewigen Seligkeit, an dem Kreuz geopfert; denn solches hat er selber gewollt. Esai. 53.a. Joh. 2.c. 1. Pet. 1.c. Eph. 5.a."

After this summary Philipps stated that they considered any one who did not believe in the eternal divinity (Gottheit) and the real humanity of Jesus Christ, an anti-Christ. He also insists that it is not sufficient to accept this as a fact merely. If it is to have any value it must affect the life of the confessor

or he is no better than the devil who also believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and of man. Philipps calls this real kind of faith in Christ the belief in Him as the "Word". He makes a great deal of this expression. His idea seems to be that Christ is an expression of God's mind (Gemüt) in the form of a Word-being (wesentliches Wort) and therefore different from all other "Words" of God. As such a being Christ was with the Father from the beginning. He limited Himself, of His own volition, in order to carry out the purposes of God on this earth and then returned to the Father where He continues to exist as He did before His sojourn upon earth. He is of the same kind and nature with the Father (gleicher Art und Natur).

Philipps seems also to have had difficulty in avoiding a conflict in his mind as to how Christ (Jesus) could have received the substance of His body from Mary and yet not partake of the inheritance of "Adam's sin". His solution was that God had created the body of Jesus in Mary. His defense of his position clearly indicates that it was a reaction against the crass interpretations of the "world" on this subject.

In his chapter "Von der rechten Erkenntnis Jesu Christi" (Enchiridion pp. 127-158) Philipps reviews the foregoing points in the light of Scripture and finds a great many passages in both the Old and the New Testaments bearing on the subject from his view-

point. The extreme literalness of interpretation and the tendency to look for "proof texts" is quite in evidence but that is not surprising when we take into consideration the time in which he wrote. He takes it for granted that his readers are acquainted with the Scriptures and he also maintains that the correct conception of Christ is a matter of faith rather than a matter of intellectual understanding. He considers the relation of Jesus Christ to the Father a mystery which is of real significance to mankind as a matter of life, both here on earth and in the world to come. He admonishes his readers to believe this mystery and admits significantly: "Aber das ist der Vernunft unbegreiflich und muss allein mit dem Glauben gefasset werden, dass Jesus Christus, der aus dem Vater ist nach dem Fleisch, dass derselbige überall GOtt ist, gebenedeyet in Ewigkeit, darum sagt Paulus, dass dies gottselige Geheimniss gross ist, nämlich: Dass GOtt geoffenbaret ist in dem Fleisch, fromm gemacht in dem Geist, erschienen denen Engeln, geprediget denen Heiden, beglaubet von der Welt, aufgenommen in die Herrlichkeit. 2. Tim. 3.b. Diese Heimlichkeit konnte der Apostel Thomas zum ersten nicht erkennen, aber da er von Gott durch den Heiligen Geist erleuchtet und durch die Erfahrung recht gelehret, und also recht gläubig worden war, sprach er zu Christum: Mein HErr und mein GOtt. (Joh. 20.d.) Welche Bekenntnis Thomä nicht zu dem Vater, sondern zu Christo ge-

sprochen ist, und darum nicht auf den Vater, sondern auf Christum muss verstanden werden."

This emphasis on faith rather than on intellectual discernment was not, on the part of Philipps, a case of evading a difficult problem. He and his associates were so much concerned with the ethical application of the principles of Christ that they could not sever the practical from the purely theoretical. There were such within the movement who reacted so strongly from the intellectual subtleties and the evil lives of many of the learned that they despised learning, but this was not the case with Philipps. He got at the truth of the Gospels by what Denney calls "a truly religious way". He, and in this he was a type for the movement as a whole, belongs to the class of people to whom Denney refers (Jesus and the Gospel, p. 150) when he says: "When a man who is morally in earnest, absorbed in the effort to lead a spiritual life in the world of nature, a life of freedom in the realm of necessity, takes the Gospels into his hand and looks upon the figure of Jesus, the last thing which will occur to him is that this figure is unreal. There may be a great deal in the Gospel narratives which puzzles him, which he does not know what to do with, and for the present must ignore; but there is something also which is its own evidence and which rises out of the narrative in unquestionable reality—the spiritual life of Jesus". For Philipps and his associates this was also true of Je-

sus Christ, both as the Son of God eternally with the Father and as Jesus of Nazareth, in His relation to and with the Father. They perused the Gospels and found in them the reality of this Jesus Christ confronting them. Of this one thing they were sure and they were content to let the matter rest there so far as intellectual discernment of details was concerned. They believed it, and believing it, tried to live as tho it were really true.

If, as Dr. MacKenzie says, "we must in our theology conceive of the person of Christ in relation to the community whose very consciousness is that it lives in Him," then Philipps and his associates give us a pretty clear conception of the power of Christ's personality over human beings. It was in this direction that they gave the evidence of their conception of Him rather than in the form of nicely balanced creeds. Without considering the latter as of no value, they felt as Wedel expresses himself (Meditationen, 168): "Aber blosse Ideen, Lehrsätze, Ansichten—und seien sie auch gut und schön, bilden kein haltbares Fundament religiöser Ueberzeugung." This does not mean that they did not value thot, and especially devotional thot. A man was to live in personal relationship with Christ, in a real communion with Him, but this communion was to bear fruitage in the way the man who professed to have it conducted himself. Wedel says: "Religion ist ihrem Tiefsinn nach Gemeinschaft mit Gott, so dass

der Mensch göttliche Kraftwirkungen in seinem Herzen erfähret." (Meditationen, p. 168.) It was this working power in the hearts of men that these early Mennonites were most concerned with and their position was what it was because of their conception of Jesus Christ.

In this principal emphasis and central fact of their position Menno Simon agreed with the rest. This was what bound the movement so closely together that the differences of opinion on minor matters could not prevent it from crystallizing into a denomination. What was true of the leaders, was also true of the rank and file of the movement. We repeatedly find that men and women "were baptized on their faith in Christ in order that they might rise with Him and walk with Him in the new life".

It was only when these people were forced to give expression, under pressure, to their beliefs that the "peculiar views", which they were supposed to possess came to the fore, and even then we do not find that these "views" were more than an attempt to solve problems in a realm in which they did not feel themselves at home. For example, we find that Menno contradicted himself in regard to his "view" of the incarnation. In the heat of discussion he declared himself as believing that Jesus had merely passed thru Mary, but when he writes his exposition of the 25th Psalm he says: "O Lord! I am not ashamed

of my doctrine before Thee and Thine angels, much less before this rebellious world; for I know assuredly that I teach Thy Word. I have taught throughout a repentance, a dying unto our sinful flesh and the new life that cometh from God. I have taught a true, sincere faith in Thee and Thy beloved Son, that it might be made powerful through love. I have taught Jesus Christ and Him crucified, very God and very man, who, in an incomprehensible, inexpressible and indescribable manner, was born of Thee from all eternity, the eternal Word and Wisdom, the brightness of Thy glory and the express image of Thy person; and that, in fullness of time, through the power of Thy Holy Spirit, He became in the womb of the unspotted virgin, Mary, real flesh and blood, a visible, tangible and mortal man like unto Adam and his posterity in all things, yet without sin, born of the seed or lineage of Abraham and David, dead and buried He rose again, ascended into heaven and thus became before Thee our only and eternal Advocate, Mediator, Intercessor and Redeemer. If all prophets, apostles and evangelists have not taught this with the greatest clearness from the beginning, I will gladly bear my shame and reproof." (Exposition of Ps. 25:19.)

The writer has attempted to get at the real thinking of these people by reading a large variety of authors on the Reformation Period and by reading widely in the productions of the Anabaptist and early Men-

nonite leaders. It seemed to him that only in this way would it be possible to get at the probable conceptions which these men possessed on the points involved in a discussion of Christ's Headship of the Church. The "proof text" method avails little in this undertaking because of the inconsistencies due to the conditions of unrest under which these men lived and labored.

The result of his study leads the writer to believe that to the Anabaptist and early Mennonite leaders Jesus Christ was the Son of God in a unique sense; that He had been with the Father from "the beginning"; that He came into this world voluntarily in order to carry out purposes of the Father which could be carried out in no other way; that He limited Himself in order to take this step; that He came as a man (human being) and lived as a man, except that He remained sinless; that, having died the natural human death on the cross, He was buried; that He rose from the dead; that He ascended into heaven, which means, that He has returned to the same position which He held before He limited Himself in order to come onto the earth.

Such was their working conception of the personality of Jesus Christ. Some of the reasons why they held such views regarding His personality will come out more clearly in the next section of this chapter, dealing with the work of Jesus Christ as these men conceived of it.

B. Conceptions of Anabaptist Leaders Regarding Christ's Work.

According to these leaders, the work of Jesus Christ is vitally connected with the fact of sin. They thot of Him as having had a share in the creation (based on Heb. 1:2 and Eph. 3:9), it is true, but they felt that His supreme work was the "re-creation" or restoration of mankind, which was made necessary thru the entrance of sin into the world.

They conceived of sin as selfish, willful disobedience. Thru the first act of disobedience on the part of the parents of the race "sin with all its sad consequences came into the world". This fact had its far-reaching effects upon every relation of men, "first of all, however, for our first parents (Rom. 5:12-21). Through it they fell from their innocence and were filled with shame; in the place of their filial reverence and open-heartedness came fear and pangs of conscience (Gen. 3:1-8); in place of the unrestrained and intimate converse with God, a condition of antipathy and estrangement from Him (John 3:20); yea, the wrath and severity of the holy and righteous Creator (Eph. 2:3). Besides the peace with God they also lost the peace with their surroundings, they must pass under the sentence of death (Rom. 5), were driven from the Garden of Eden, the way to the tree of life was closed to them (Gen. 3:24), the earth itself was

cursed on their account, and they were doomed to much pain and hard work (Gen. 3:16-19)."

"All this misery and wretchedness was passed as a natural heritage upon all their posterity (I Cor. 15:21, 22), for how could they bring forth seed different from themselves (Job 14:4; John 3:6), or how could they transmit prerogatives which they themselves had lost? Therefore we believe that they and all their posterity in, through and with them have become subject to physical (Rom. 5:14; I Cor. 15:21, 22), spiritual (Eph. 4:18; Jas. 1:15; Rom. 7:13), and eternal death (Rom. 6:23), and utterly unable to be saved therefrom either by their own efforts (Rom. 3:23; Jer. 13:23) or through any creature (Ps. 49:7, 8). In this miserable condition they would therefore have to remain forever, if God had not come to them in His mercy. Ezek. 16:5, 6." (Mennonite Articles of Faith, compiled and stated by Cornelis Ris, Article VIII.)

The Anabaptists and early Mennonites believed that God had foreseen this deplorable condition but that He had not fore-willed it and that therefore He was not responsible to man after the relationship between them had been broken thru sin. They do not seem to have taken into consideration the later problems of whether God was not responsible if He foreknew that man would sin, or whether God might not have willed that man should sin, etc. They simply reasoned that thru sin man had forfeited his rights

and that God had given man another chance thru an act of grace on His part. This act of grace consisted in sending His only begotten Son upon the earth for the purpose of redeeming man. Here is where the supreme work of Jesus Christ sets in for them. They treated the subject in a rather general way and therefore one does not always find the fine distinctions which one might wish for in order to settle all questions which arise in connection with this study. Their method was a combination of literal verbalism and a kind of practical agnosticism. In attempting to settle difficult questions they looked for "proof-texts" in the Bible and accepted these as authority. What these did not make clear to the understanding was accepted in suspended judgment, as it were. The foregoing statement is not an adverse criticism on the efforts of these honest leaders, they were not alone in the use of it and were in a less advantageous position to use better methods than were some of those who used this same method. The statement was made in order to show the difficulty of applying modern interpretations to their statements without taking into consideration attendant circumstances.

According to the conception of these leaders Adam and Eve still had a capacity for a promise of God. They had not lost everything. There was still a possibility for a new start on the basis of deciding to accept God's offer of grace. That is why we find so

much of the thinking of these leaders occupying itself with freedom of will, responsibility, faith and love. These were all considered as phases of the man-side part in the reestablishment of a right relationship between God and man and therefore will be treated more fully in the next section of this chapter.

It was a part of the conception of the leaders in question to believe that man had been misled and that thru this misleading he had fallen, which meant that he had lost his standing with God, not that he had become "drowned in sin', as Luther expressed it. In the face of this situation God acted. Wedel states the matter thus: "Im Willen des Vaters ist der Menschheit Heil begründet, im Werk des Sohnes auf Erden vollzogen; durch das Wirken des Heiligen Geistes wird es des Menschen Teil und Besitz." Thus the work of the Christ was to execute the will of the Father upon earth. This, in the minds of the Anabaptist leaders, made Him the Chief Executive of God's work upon earth and as such He would be the Head of whatever following would result from His efforts in carrying out the will of the Father. They made much of the personal, intimate relationship between God and man in Eden and carried that same idea over into the relationship between men and Jesus Christ under the new regime. This made Jesus Christ their Head in a practical rather than an abstract sense as will be seen from their conception of the Church. He came into this

world to carry out the will of the Father in helping fallen mankind in the sense that He fully represented the Father in the regime which was to be established upon the earth under the new conditions which had been brot about by the fall of man. In this sense He was conceived of as King. Henceforth men had to look to Jesus Christ for the conditions under which they might enter into a right relationship with the Father, i. e. become members of the kingdom of God. It was to Him also that they would have to look for the forgiveness of their sins by way of preparation for entrance into that kingdom. This made Him the Court of last Resort in all matters pertaining to the relationship between God and any man, i. e. it made Him the Judge of the race and of every individual in it. Hence they looked upon anything which Jesus had said as the utterance of **the One** in supreme authority.

As the Supreme Authority representing God, the Father, in His grace, Jesus Christ was conceived of as the final Lawgiver. His law was the law of love and what He told men to do or not to do specifically was told them in order that they might become more proficient in that law of love. Hence, in a sense, He was considered rather an administrator or a reinterpretator of the law of God, as formerly revealed. It was in this sense that Hans Denck and Eitel Hans Langenmantel thot of Jesus Christ in their interpretations of love. Most of the others emphasized this

point a little less but emphasized the other more, namely the demands which Jesus makes upon His disciples, i. e. any followers. His authority to do so was not questioned. That was an essential part of the conception of His work and any one who did not place the demands of Christ first in the ordering of his life, thereby gave evidence that he did not belong to the discipleship of God's Plenipotentiary upon earth and therefore not to God. To what situations this conception of Christ's work and position led will be seen more clearly under the discussion of their conception of the Church.

The representatives of the Anabaptist movement conceived of faith as being the supreme demand of Christ upon His disciples. This was not a mere taking for granted that what He had said about Himself was true. It was an act of willing confidence on the part of men. Without this attitude no one could be saved, i. e. no one could accept the grace of God and get into a right relationship with Him. In this sense their faith was a reverent fear of God as seen in Jesus Christ. They left no hope for the man who simply believed, took for granted that what the Bible said concerning Jesus Christ was true, but classed him with the devils who also had such "faith". Hence it is clear why they laid so much stress upon sincere repentance. They took Mark. 1:15, "Repent ye, and believe," very literally. They believed the "imagination of a man's

heart is evil from his youth up" (Gen. 8:21) and that therefore he needs to repent and to strive for the betterment of his life, which can be accomplished thru faith in Jesus Christ. Having repented and decided, with the help of Christ, to lead a good life, he was to be baptized and to partake of the Lord's Supper. In no case was a man to think that these or any other ceremonies would help him unless he had repented and believed on Christ. (Cf. Christliche Glaubens-Bekenntnis, T. T. V. S. pp. 11ff.) When a man had so repented they took it for granted that he had received pardon from God. On account of this pardon he was recognized as a child of God and therefore eligible to membership in the community. Having thus confessed publicly that he believed with all his heart "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Cor.3:11), he was henceforth expected to show by a consistent life that he continued to believe this, for it was taken for granted that Christ's demand for faith meant more than a mere oral profession. The members were frequently reminded that "where sincere and true faith is, which avails before God, which is a gift from Him and comes from hearing the Holy Word, through the blossoming tree of life, full of all manner of precious fruits of righteousness, such as the fear and love of God, mercy, friendship, chastity, temperance, humility, candor, truth, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost etc., there is a sincere, evangelical,

pious faith; there also are the fruits of an evangelical nature." Men were taught that they should submissively believe and follow the Word of God, however heretical and ridiculous it might appear to them, not murmuring against the Lord because they did not understand why He had so commanded it. This was a very serious matter with these people and we find many references to it in the writings of the more prominent leaders, e. g. Menno Simon says: "I testify the truth to you in Christ and lie not. All who hear not the voice of Christ, believe not His Holy Word, follow not His pure, unblamable life, from the whole heart, in all humility, patience, meekness, obedience and love, have not the living faith of Moses, but are, after the contents of his doctrine, already judged. O reader, beware, neither money, name nor boasting will avail you, but power and deeds, if you wish to be saved and not condemned." (Cf. Menno Simon on Faith, Complete Works, pp. 118ff.)

This emphasis on faith was so strong because they believed that Christ demanded it. This was not a matter of mere slavish submission, however, for they believed that this faith was possible because of God's gracious willingness to help men and therefore it was considered evidence of gross ingratitude toward God not to accept the opportunity to have such faith and to live accordingly.

There seems to have been no disposition to distin-

guish between faith in God and faith in Jesus Christ. That was a question about which some may have wondered now and then but does not seem to be one which came up for very serious consideration at the time with which we are especially concerned. These leaders and their followers were too much concerned with the emphasis on the ethical side of that which was expected of them as followers of Christ. Besides there was a tendency to consider the pondering of metaphysical questions as dangerous. To them Jesus Christ was one with the Father and fully represented the latter. This was sufficient for them. The two prime reasons for this attitude were probably the feeling of insecurity in undertaking the solution of metaphysical questions and the powerful reaction against the learned theologians of their day who spent their time and their powers in making subtle distinctions and then lived as tho the facts of God and of Jesus Christ were in no way connected with the lives of people who knew about them.

Another demand of Jesus which was taken very literally by these people was that of surrender. When a man confessed to be a follower of Christ he thereby gave evidence that he was willing to give up everything which He might require. This probably accounts for the spirit of martyrdom which was so evident among the members of this movement. They prayed to God in Christ's name and they lived for God as

they knew Him thru Christ because they felt that they could not be children of God aside from this attitude toward Christ. They believed very literally that "there is no limit to the sacrifice which the purity of heart demands." For them, also "To be in Christ is to walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit . . . To be in Christ means to realize and to try to fulfill one's obligations to the various material and social relations in which he is providentially placed." (The Christian Doctrine of Salvation, Stevens, pp. 463-4.)

In this their attitude of complete surrender to Christ they seemed to have felt that they were simply complying with what He had a perfect right to expect of any one who professed His lordship. In so doing they implied their belief in the fact that Christ imposes a test of character when He speaks of those who are "worthy of Him". How strongly they insisted upon a recognition of this fact will be shown more fully in the section dealing with their conception of the Church.

Whatever conceptions these leaders expressed concerning the work of Christ found their center in the fact that He had brot salvation to men by becoming the means of their redemption from sin. In regard to this redemption (Wiederaufrichtung) and reconciliation (Versöhnung) of men they believed that God did not desire to reject (verwerfen) mankind entirely, in spite of the fact that they had sinned and that they

possessed no means of redeeming themselves, but that He called them again and comforted them, showing that He still had means for their reconciliation, namely the "unspotted Lamb of God", who was provided (versehen) before the beginning of the world and was promised to them and to their descendants for their comfort, redemption and salvation when they were in Paradise, and who has since been given them thru faith. "For this Promised One the forefathers longed and looked for Him through faith that He should come to redeem, make free and uplift (aufhelfen) mankind from their guilt (Schuldt) and unrighteousness." (For the complete text of this summary see Appendix IV.)

The foregoing shows, as they emphasized so often, that these leaders believed the grace of God to be the ground of salvation, but at the same time they placed strong emphasis upon the fact that man must respond to God's advances in order to make salvation effective. They were accustomed to emphasize this double fact with the statement that if people did not live in accordance with what it implied that "the precious blood of Christ had been shed in vain."

In attempting to solve the problem of salvation they laid great stress upon the "prophecies concerning the Christ." The following quotation from Stevens (The Christian Doctrine of Salvation, p. 34) is a very suggestive approximation of their conclusions on this point: "Let us now summarize the elements of pro-

phetic teaching which approximate most closely to the Christian doctrine of salvation. They are chiefly these: (1) Salvation is not primarily a national or collective, but an individual affair. (2) It is, above all, an ethical process—the recovery of the life from sin to harmony with God through moral likeness to Him. (3) The conditions on which this salvation must be realized are accordingly moral. Man connot be set right before God by any ceremony or transaction performed on his behalf. He must personally repent of his sin and forsake it. (4) But in so doing man can never anticipate the grace of God nor does he achieve his salvation without the divine aid. (5) The experience of the righteous bearing the sins of the unrighteous in Israel is adapted to suggest the thought of a divine vicarious suffering in which a greater than human love should take the woes and burdens of sinful men upon itself." The acknowledgment of this completed work of Christ they conceived of as being equivalent to eternal life, for instance Dirk Philipps says: "Dieses ist nun die rechte Erkenntniss Christi Jesu, die auch das ewige Leben ist, gleichwie Christus selber sagt: 'Das ist das ewige Leben, (o Vater) dass sie dich, der du allein wahrer Gott bist, und den du gesandt hast, Jesum Christum, erkennen.' 1. Joh. 5.e; Gal. 3.d; Joh. 17.a. (Enchiridion, p. 148.) He immediately adds, however: "Aber diese Erkenntniss ist nicht eine historische Wissenschaft von Christo, wie viele meinen, sondern ein lebendig und

kräftiges Werk Gottes in dem Menschen, dadurch er verändert neu aus Gott gebohren, und mit dem Heiligen Geist erleuchtet und begabet wird, also dass er gesinnet ist, wie Christus Jesus, dessen Bruder und Mitgenosse er aus Gnaden durch den Glauben und die neue Geburt geworden ist." This addition is significant because it is so characteristic of the movement in that it shows that these people were more concerned about the practical application of the work of Christ than they were in an intellectually satisfactory conception of just how this work had been accomplished.

If one were to base his conclusions entirely upon verbal quotations from the writings of these men one might be inclined to think that they believed in a literal transfer of the sins of men to Christ, but when one has read widely in order to come to a fuller understanding of their real thinking on this point, one hardly feels justified in maintaining too positively that they believed in such a literal transfer.

They were too much disinclined toward ceremonies to fall victims to the easy method of a literal transfer of the sins of men to Christ. It is usually taken, and to the writer it seems, rightly so, that for such who retain strenuous moral ideas of religion this cannot be a fully satisfactory method, however highly they may appreciate the atoning work of Jesus Christ. To such there still remains the responsibility of concentrating their wills upon the kind of living which is in accord-

ance with the will of Christ. Judged according to this idea the writer is not inclined to believe that these early writers were developing in the direction of any belief concerning Christ's atonement which could in any way be classified as crass literalism. Besides there are also indications that they looked upon the sufferings of Christ as resulting from the products of sin rather than from a literal transfer.

The language which they use in speaking of this act of Christ illustrates rather than defines what it meant to them, e. g.: "Jesus Christ the all-sufficient and eternal offering"; "The Propitiator and Mediator of the New Testament"; "The gracious Father be eternally praised that He has given . . . us to know the only and eternal offering of His Son, Jesus Christ, who, according to the order of Melchizedek, is ordained an eternal High Priest over the house of God; who, in the days of His flesh, offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears, unto Him that was able to save from death, and was heard, because He honored God. This One, I say, offered an acceptable offering, a sweet smelling sacrifice, of eternal worth, whereby He appeases the Father's wrath, reconciles the human race, opened heaven, closed hell; made peace between heaven and earth and sits now and henceforth at the right hand of His Father till His enemies be made His foot-stool; yea, with this one offering He has perfected forever all those who are

sanctified. This cannot be gainsayed, whether by emperor or king, doctor or teacher, angel or devil. His Word stands firm and immovable. He has with one offering—I say, with one offering—perfected forever those who are sanctified." "Christ, the true remedy for sin"; "our only and eternal Mediator, Advocate, High Priest, Propitiator and Intercessor, our Head and Brother." "Thou didst send Thy beloved Son, the dear pledge of Thy grace, who preached Thy Word, fulfilled Thy righteousness, accomplished Thy will, bore our sins, blotted them out with His blood, and brought about reconciliation, conquered the devil, hell, sin and death and obtained grace, mercy, favor and peace for all who truly believe on Him; His command is eternal life." "Christ was given to us and died for us." "He bore all our sins upon the cross in His own body and our debt He blotted out by His blood." "O ever living God, through the mercies of Thy Son and through the riches of Thy grace we receive the remission of our sins; yea, through His blood Thou didst reconcile all upon earth and in heaven above." "Darnach so ist es allen Christen nötig zu bedenken und die Ursach zu erwägen, warum dass die Wahrheit Gottes, das Wort Gottes, und der Sohn des Allerhöchsten, sich also erniedriget hat, und ein Mensch worden ist, nämlich, zum ersten, unsere Sünd hinweg zu nehmen."

Just as with Paul and other writers of the early church, it is but fair to suppose that many of the terms

which they used had for them a practical and a religious rather than a metaphysical meaning, so also with the leaders during the Reformation Period. This was especially true of such men who emphasized the ethical and moral side of Christianity as did so many of the Anabaptist and early Mennonite leaders.

"The faith of the church being an act of life's self-committal and worship is more than a posthumous impression left by Christ." (Forsythe, The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, p. 151.) This was certainly true of these Anabaptist and early Mennonite leaders. They not only believed that Jesus Christ had died for the sins of men but also that He had been raised from the dead. They persistently emphasized the fact that "He was delivered up for our tresspasses, and was raised for our justification." Rom. 4:25. To them the resurrection was "the Father's Amen to Jesus' 'It is finished'." (Wedel, Meditationen, p. 162.) They conceived of Him as having risen from the dead, as victor over sin and death, and as having returned to the Father, thus entering in "once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." Heb. 9:12. They did not conceive this removal of Christ from the earth as equivalent to His withdrawal from His active interest in men. Thru the ascension He became an Advocate with the Father and continued His offices of Prophet, High Priest and King.

As Prophet He was thot to continue His work of

teaching by means of His Holy Word and thru "the Spirit according to His promise, both convincing and winning the unbelieving and leading the believers into all truth. John 16:13. In this work the Spirit never contradicts the true meaning of the written Word (Jas. 3:11; 1:17), but enlightens the believer's mind to a right understanding of the Word (Luke 24:45), gives them assurance of its truth and brings to remembrance the things that the Lord has spoken. John 14:26." (Ris, Die Glaubens-Lehre, Article 14.)

The work of Christ as High Priest is epitomized as follows in the Mennonite catechisms: "He gave Himself an offering; He intercedes for His people and blesses His own." Eph. 5:2; Heb. 9:26; John 17; Rom. 8:34; Luke 24:50; Eph. 1:3. Ris, in his Glaubens-Lehre (Article 15), after speaking of Christ's work as High Priest upon earth says: "Thereafter He ascended into heaven as a triumphant victor (Eph. 4:8; Col. 2:15) before the eyes of all His faithful apostles (Luke 24:50-52) and sat down at the right hand of the Father (Mark. 16:19) crowned with honor and glory. Heb. 2:9; John 17:5.

"There, and thus clothed, He continues His holy office as our high priest. Heb. 8:1. For as He is the servant of the true tabernacle, He has entered not through the blood of calves and goats, but through His own blood, once into heaven itself (Heb. 9:11, 24) to appear before the face of God in behalf of the believers.

Wherefore He is called of God a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedeck (Heb. 5:10; Ps. 110:4) to the great comfort of the believers in their infirmities. Heb. 4:14-16. And as He has an everlasting priesthood, since He abides forever, He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God through Him, seeing that He ever liveth to make intercession for them. Heb. 7:24, 25; I John 2:1, 2.

"Lastly. As it was the part of the high priest, after completing the offering of atonement, to return to the waiting and praying people to bless them, so Christ, the great High Priest, is continually bestowing upon His Own the fruit, the power, and the sufficiency of His sacrifice that they may benefit by them. Acts 3:26. Having the power and the right to forgive sins (Mark 2:10; Matt. 28:18), He grants this blessing to the penitent (Acts 5:31); through His blood of sprinkling He purges the conscience from dead works (Heb. 9:14) and thus gives boldness and confidence to draw nigh unto God. Eph. 3:12. He baptizes them with His Spirit (John 1:33), holds spiritual and intimate communion with them (Rev. 3:20; John 14:21-23), yea, and He makes His holy and redeemed people themselves to be a royal priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God. I Pet. 2:5, 9.

"From all this follows self-evidently that the Levitical priesthood (Heb. 10:5-9) and with it the ceremonial law, has been fulfilled, has come to an end, and

has been abolished. The law had only the shadow of good things to come (Heb. 10:1) and it ended in Christ (Rom. 10:4) to whom be glory forever. Amen!" (Article XV.)

Since the foregoing quotations are based quite directly upon the beliefs and conceptions of the earliest Mennonite leaders they give us perhaps the clearest insight into the conceptions of those leaders concerning Christ as High Priest. The same is also true of their conceptions concerning His Kingship. Of this the Mennonite catechisms say, "He gives commands and laws; He governs His people; He puts all His enemies under His feet; He protects and rewards His own." John 13:34; Jer. 23:5; I Cor. 15:25; Matt. 25: 34. And Ris, in his Glaubens-Lehre, Article 16, says of the kingly office of Christ: "The Lord Jesus Christ, as the one promised and heavenly King of the new covenant (Ps. 2:6; Jer. 23:5; Luke 1:32, 33), having by His glorious resurrection proved Himself victor over the devil, over death and the grave (Col. 2:15; Luke 24:47), yet more especially when He ascended on high (Eph. 4:8) entered into His glory (Luke 24: 26), and sat down on the right hand of His Father in heaven (Heb. 1:3) of which He gave the strongest proof when on the day of Pentecost He poured forth abundantly the Holy Spirit upon His apostles. (Acts 2:33-36.

"Thenceforth the kingdom of God came with power so that from that day on, through the instrumentality of the apostles great numbers of believing and spiritually-minded people were gathered (Acts 2:41, 47; 4:32, 33) who confessed Jesus Christ as their Lord to the glory of God the Father. Phil. 2:9-11.

"The spiritual kingdom, generally called the kingdom of heaven, the Lord Jesus has committed in part to His servants here on earth to administer according to the spiritual laws of His kingdom. Eph. 4:11, 12; I Pet. 5:1-4. Yet, above all and in particular He Himself administers the same direct from heaven. He rules the hearts of His people through the Holy Spirit (John 16:13; 14:26), in accordance with His Word, with passionate love; He protects and shelters them as under His wings, equips them with spiritual weapons against His and their enemies (Eph. 6:11-18) and is to them a very present help in trouble so that in Him they are more than conquerors (Rom. 8:37); He prepares for them a place in heaven (John 14:2) and will, by grace, give victory and a crown of righteousness in the life eternal (II Tim. 4:7, 8) to all who continue faithful to Him in the spiritual conflict with sin and Satan (Rev. 2:10; Matt. 24:13), but His enemies He will put under His feet. Matt. 22:24."

Such was the nature of the work of which these Anabaptist leaders considered Christ the Head and

Author. Thru Him they saw God in His authority, His holiness and His love supremely revealed so that Christ stood in God's place for them, yet not so as to displace God. Christ had become the point of contact, as it were, between God and men. He had revealed to men that God loved them infinitely more than they thot possible and had shown them that they might get much closer to the heart of God than they had dared to hope.

In the thinking of these men, Christ, the Prophet-Teacher, taught men the truth as it had never been taught before; revealed to them the possibilities before men as they had never been revealed before and substantiated both His teachings and His revelations with miraculous deeds. As High Priest He made a supreme and all-sufficient offering of Himself so that in some way He passed thru an experience for them and thus made it possible for men to be saved from the doom of eternal separation from God. In passing thru this experience He in some way suffered for them or in their stead; paid a price for them and gave up His life for them. All of this made these leaders emphasize the need and the fitness of a grateful response to God because of what He had done for mankind thru Christ. As High Priest Christ was also conceived of as continuing His work of intercession in behalf of men before God. As King He had established a new regime on earth. Of this He was and is the supreme

authority. This "kingdom" is spiritual and not "carnal". This latter fact was very emphatically presented as will be seen in the following section. It was in the interpretation of this idea that their conception of Christ's Headship of the Church was most clearly revealed because it touched more directly upon matters uppermost in their lives.

C. Conceptions of Anabaptist and Early Mennonite Leaders Regarding the Church.

These leaders saw in Jesus Christ, as did the Apostle Paul, the Head and Founder of a new spiritual humanity; His life was the perfect type of God-like living; He was the Captain of their salvation and the Leader in whose foot-steps they strove to follow. He had become the cause for such a conception on the part of men before He left His earthly ministry and had sent these men out into a world of spiritual maladjustments in order to bring His message as "Good News" to that world. According to Ritschl, the aim of Christ is realized thru the founding and the upbuilding of the kingdom of God on earth, which is the community of the God-like, the fellowship of those who share Christ's spirit in the life of conscious Sonship to God.

This work which Christ had started as an expression of His aim with the world had progressed rapidly for a few generations, but after the lapse of fifteen

centuries there was another case of mal-adjustment. It was similar to that which Christ had found in the Jewish Church when He began to establish His Church upon earth. Again, it was not the enemies from without, but the enemies from within who were hampering the work of God on earth. "The ancient Church had turned its conclusions (dogmata) into weapons of discipline, wielded by a centralized power." This condition of affairs was evidently satisfactory to those who saw little or no connection between the Church and spiritual life as it grows out of real and personal fellowship with Jesus Christ, but there were those who insisted upon such a connection and the result was the Reformation. "With the Reformation came a new conception of the Christian life . . . Luther and the other great reformers maintained that they were loyal to the councils of the early Church. The Decree of Chalcedon stood forth for them all as the supreme utterance of the Christological utterances of the Church. But this loyalty to the councils was conditioned by the idea that the councils simply explained the Scripture, and were authoritative only in so far as Scripture supported them. The reformers completely disowned the notion that the official Church had power to develope and enforce an authoritative theology. The central fact for the reformers is that Christian faith is a living experience, made possible by the full revelation of God in the historic Christ. Apart from Him

there is no saving knowledge in God." (Dr. MacKenzie, Jesus Christ, Cyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, p. 539.)

Unfortunately Luther and other reformers left this position when prudence seemed to dictate that they should lean upon the same kind of external authority which they had condemned in the Roman Church. Until this occurred the Anabaptists remained with the reformers, and they found it difficult to adjust themselves to their new problems when they found that the reformers had given up this position for which they had risked so much in the beginning and which was so dear to the hearts of the people, especially to those who had become saturated with the truths of the Bible. The latter studied the situation from a new view-point, for they had rediscovered the Christ who had been hidden from them by the ceremonies of the Church of Rome. The result was that there was a new Church arising as a protest against that which hid the Christ, the Head of the true Church. This protest, resulting from the study of the Bible, needs to be distinguished from other protests of that time arising from other causes. With the latter it was usually a question of which human authority should be accepted, but in the case of the spiritually-minded Anabaptists it was a question as to whether any human authority should continue to rule the Church or whether Jesus Christ was to be recognized as the

Head of the Church in fact as well as in theory. Their protest was a reaction against the inconsistency which Dr. MacKenzie points out when he says: "Constantine took the portentous step of summoning the Council, and, for the spiritual religion, the baneful step of using the fleshly arm for enforcing its conclusions. It must be remembered that these acts of Constantine introduced a new principle into the organized life of the Church of so potent a character that it took long centuries to unfold its inner logic. Trust in the State and trust in the ruling Spirit of Christ are principles whose reconciliation is not yet achieved either at Rome or at Berlin." (Jesus Christ, Cyclop. of Religion and Ethics, p. 535.)

This suggestion is of special interest in view of recent developments and makes one appreciate the attitude of these Anabaptist leaders all the more. In spite of their contribution to the world men have continued to allow themselves to be led astray by the will-o'-the-wisp of a possible satisfactory fusion of Church and State. Is it not worthy of our time and effort that we should attempt to estimate the bearing that their attitude might have had on the present world situation if that attitude had been appreciated? To be sure, such thinking will not change the effects of wrong committed and of right neglected, but it may stimulate the desire of those who would refrain from passing down to posterity the kind of heritage

which the enemies of the Anabaptists have left to this age.

These people believed in a visible Church (Gemeine) of God consisting of those who had repented fully, who had correct faith, had been baptized correctly, are united with God and are members of the community of saints on earth. These they considered as the "elect", the "kingly priesthood", "a holy people", "the Bride of Christ" and the children and heirs of eternal life; a tabernacle, a tent and "Wohnstadt" of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, of which Christ Himself is the corner-stone. (Cf. Christliches Glaubensbekenntnis, T. T. V. S., pp. 13ff.)

Back of this language, as seen thru the lives which they lived, we see a deep conviction that in spiritual matters Christ alone is and can be the real Head. This conception of Christ finally influenced their conceptions of all the agencies of religion and even society with which they were brot into contact. Because they failed to find this emphasis in any of the established churches they began the difficult work of starting a new organization. We must distinguish here between the movement in general and the attempts to crystallize portions of it into permanent organizations. The spread of the movement was a comparatively spontaneous matter, but with the attempts

to organize there arose almost insurmountable difficulties because the position of the Anabaptists and early Mennonites on the various questions aroused the opposition of both the Church and the State against them. The difficulties were especially acute because of the close relationship between the established Churches and the State. The insistence of the Anabaptists on Christ as the supreme authority increased their tendency to a literal interpretation of the Bible and finally led to the conclusion which Zwingli had reached earlier: "The Church must reject in doctrine and practice everything not positively enjoined by Scripture," but, as Schaff says, "the Zwinglian reformers aimed to reform the old Church by the Bible: the Anabaptists attempted to build a new Church from the Bible." This difference of emphasis was anything but a matter of the use of different prepositions in those days. The spiritually-minded Anabaptists were very much in earnest and when they finally left the following of the reformers it meant that they had done so after deep consideration and with great determination. The more they saw of theological subtleties and of affiliation of the Church with the State the more they emphasized the need of withdrawing from both if one were going to remain a follower of Jesus Christ. In how far they may have been as fully justified in every case, as they thot they were, is of less concern to us here than the fact that

they acted as they did because they believed so strenuously that Christ is and must remain the supreme authority of the Church. They believed that if Christ had founded the Church it was He, and not selfish men, who was to have the final word as to how that Church was to be developed. The social, ethical and spiritual conditions all pointed out the presence of deep-seated mal-adjustments and the unwillingness, on the part of those in power, to adjust matters, appeared so impregnable that there seemed no other way left for those who insisted so strongly upon the Rule of Christ but to form a new organization, just as Jesus had done when the Jewish nation faced Him in a similar manner and spirit fifteen centuries before.

It has already been indicated that this question of organization was no easy one. Not only did the opposition from without afford many difficulties, but the work was also much hampered by the very fact that the movement had grown so large before any organization was attempted. This was the difficulty to which Luther and Zwingli had fallen prey. Such a popular movement is necessarily unwieldy and full of many eddies which give the opposition from without many opportunities for attack. Under such conditions even the best of saints find out that they are still in the world even tho they may no longer be of the world. Under such conditions men either relax their principles or they restate them with new emphasis. The

great reformers had done the former, the Anabaptists did the latter.

They had neither the power nor the inclination to control the world thru might, but they did set about to produce within the world a Church which should be characterized by the principles of faith, love and obedience towards God, and of mutual love and service towards one another. They fully believed that in so doing they were fulfilling the will of Christ in regard to the Church. "In proportion as the religious life feeds itself directly upon the deeds of God in Christ and upon Christ's character, word and work, as the embodiment and manifestation of those deeds, it becomes aware again of its moral ideals and becomes charged afresh with the faith and passion for their fulfillment." (Dr. MacKenzie, Jesus Christ, Cyclop. of Religion and Ethics, p. 528.) This is the secret which must be learned before we can fully understand the power which sustained the Anabaptists in the face of the demonic persecutions which thinned their ranks again and again during the 16th century.

It is true that in their ardour to make the times of Jesus and the Apostles serve as a model for the new Church, these people over-looked the fact that those times could not be called back and that even if they could it would be impossible for people to do just as Jesus had, but, if they did fail in this direction now and then, they made up for it in the kind of lives they

succeeded in producing and in the spiritual food which they succeeded in offering to the masses hungry for such. Mueller says in his "Die Bernischen Wiedertäufer" that Luther complained that he could not find the people for an ideal Church. The Anabaptists found them and it is not to the credit of Luther and his followers that they scorned and persecuted the people who had thus banded themselves together to lead quiet and upright lives. They did not claim that they had already attained to perfection, but they made an honest effort to do so. That is what made their services and their worship so attractive to the masses in spite of the fact that so often circumstances had to decide where and how these services might be held. They were often held under the dome of God's clear sky, in the woods, in caves or narrow valleys, on the street and in many other unusual places. These very conditions sometimes seemed to lend to the meetings a beauty and a warmth which the meetings of Zwingli and his followers, held in the large churches, cleared of all their Roman Catholic paraphernalia, lacked. Many of the people who were not adherents of the movement felt themselves drawn to the Anabaptist meetings because the iconoclastic proceedings of the Zwinglians had destroyed for them the sacredness of the old churches. Many more preferred the Anabaptist meetings because of the wantonly immoral lives of too many of the Protestant preachers. "Man lief

mit Fleiss und Ernst in Holz und Feld mit grossen Scharen zu ihren Predigten." (Brons, Ursprung, Entwicklung und Schicksale der alt-evangelischen Taufgesinnten, p. 35.)

For a while the Anabaptist leaders hoped that the leaders of the established churches might correct the evils existing within them, but when they saw that there was no use in hoping for this they set about building up a Church which was to be free from these evils. They did not so much maintain that they were **the** Church of Christ as that there were none among them who were not of the Church of Christ.

This attitude raised several very important questions. The first of these was, can a person be a member of an organization, called a Church, when he gives no evidence of being a conscientious follower of Christ? This question struck at the conduct of those who were considered members of any Church. All of the established Churches made members of people thru the rite of infant baptism. This meant that those who became members were not in position to decide whether they would become followers of Christ or not and it also made it difficult to dispose of them in case they did not decide to become His followers after they were in position to decide in the matter. This condition of affairs seemed all wrong to the Anabaptists. They believed that if the Church was to be the body of Christ that His Headship should be recognizable in

the way the body conducted itself. Therefore they concluded that no one should become a member of the Church except by his own decision. This meant that he should not be baptized until he had for himself professed Christ. If the established Churches had been willing to turn the rite of infant baptism into a form of consecration the Anabaptists would not have objected, but when it was insisted upon as a means of salvation and a sign of membership in the "Body of Christ", they refused to recognize it as valid. This attitude made it necessary for the Anabaptists to give a new definition for church membership. They were soon ready with a working definition. They believed that one is called to become a member when he hears the Gospel; that he is to purify himself for the sake of Christ who is the Head of the Church. "All they know is Christ Jesus, their seeking is the pure Apostolic doctrine and the pious, unblamable life which is from God." "Members of the Church are to behave themselves in all things consistent with Christianity; they are to fear God in all their ways and to praise Him in all their works." "Christians should gird themselves with the weapons of righteousness, declare God's Word with freedom and neither shrink nor give way." "Whoever boasts that he is a Christian, must walk as Christ walked." "Christians must make up their minds to both teach and suffer, expecting that they will fare no better than the prophets of old."

"Those who know the Word of the Lord and do not live according to it, reject the cross of Christ." "It is in vain that we are called Christians, that Christ died, that we were born in a day of grace and baptized with water, if we do not walk according to His law, counsel and admonition, will and command and are not obedient to His Word." "Men must walk as all true children of God are commanded by His Word." I John 1:6, 7.

The foregoing quotations suggest what confronted the members of the Anabaptist movement when it had once become more definitely organized. The growth of the movement increased the difficulties of carrying out these ideals, but the leaders did not become discouraged. They continued to go back to their fundamental conception of Christ's Headship of the Church and decided the problems on that basis. From the midst of the turmoil, caused by persecution from without and by misunderstanding and dissension from within we continue to hear: "The almighty, eternal Father, through His eternal wisdom, Jesus Christ has instituted and commanded all things in His kingdom, that is, in His Church, relating to doctrines, sacraments and life, according to His divine council, will and wisdom . . . Christ **alone** will be the Head of the Church, the Teacher in His school, and He **alone** the King who will judge His kingdom, not with the doctrines and commands of men, nor with slaying and

murdering, but with His Holy Spirit, power, grace and Word." (Menno Simon, in his Supplication to the Magistracy.)

Such reminders in the midst of the confusion of that day had a tendency either to make men forsake the new movement or to fill them with a martyr spirit. The latter was the usual result. With this there came an ever-increasing emphasis upon ethical thinking and acting. The Sermon on the Mount and other ethical literature of the New Testament was read, committed and discussed until the people became thoroly saturated with its teachings. Passages like Mica 6:8 and II Cor. 5:15 were frequently used as admonitions and reminders. Men became as serious about their responsibilities in connection with the building up of the kingdom of God on earth as they had been about the forgiveness of their sins. "It is clear indeed that Jesus views the establishment of the kingdom as an act of grace, a miraculous and overwhelming revelation of God's power and glory most certain and most real. Yet, He also sees that God's act is not arbitrary, undetermined as to form and date by anything on the human side, a predestined event which is unrelated to man's conduct. On the contrary Jesus views the coming of the kingdom as **conditioned** by human historical acts and events." (Dr. MacKenzie, Jesus Christ, Cycl. of Religion and Ethics, p. 512.) If the foregoing statement is true then these people

were certainly making an honest effort to meet the conditions which Christ had imposed. They had not only emphasized the question of what Christ has done **for** men but also made an honest effort to find out what He could and would do **in** men. That is why they emphasized love toward all; self-possession in the face of injury and a willingness to suffer without limit.

In their study of the New Testament these leaders came to realize that Jesus had early abolished all dependence on outward ceremony as a means of salvation. This raised the second important question of those which grew out of the attitude of the Anabaptists, namely: What is the value of "sacraments" and "ceremonies"? They saw that all of the other Churches placed great emphasis upon the value of these, but they also saw that these did not agree among themselves as to the things in which that value was supposed to consist. In fact, they saw that the doctrines which were built up around the very ideas concerning these supposed values were causing a great deal of un-Christian discussion and conduct. Men were supposed to believe doctrines which had been written in defense of the positions of various leaders instead of being urged to study the Bible and to live in accordance with the spirit in which it was written. But what was even worse was the fact that men whose lives were grossly immoral were entrusted with these "sacraments" and "ceremonies" which were supposed to be of special

value for the salvation of men. This was more than the Anabaptists and other spiritually-minded people could stand. Some of them reacted against the situation so powerfully that they did away with all "ceremonies" and "sacraments", considering them of no value at all. The Anabaptists did not go so far but they maintained that there was no saving value in these rites and ceremonies of themselves. They retained baptism and the Lord's Supper. The former meant for them a confession on the part of the candidate that he had perceived and acknowledged his sins; that he had received forgiveness for them thru his faith in Jesus Christ and that he promised to lead a consistent life as a follower of Jesus Christ, depending on the power of God in so doing. It also meant that he was received as a member of the "Community" of those who had similarly turned from the world and were following Jesus Christ as their Head.

The Lord's Supper meant to them an act of commemoration of the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ; a sign of communion with Christ and an opportunity of closer communion of the believers among themselves.

As is always the case in times of deep devotional Bible study, so it was true in the case of the Anabaptists; they emphasized the meaning of the symbol rather than the symbol. This attitude naturally brot them into conflict with the Roman Catholic Church

from the start and with Luther and Zwingli and their followers long before the movement had become well organized. The conflict was long and often bitter. There were expressions on both sides which need to be read with the conditions and the times kept well in mind. The writings of the leaders on all sides (for there were more than two sides since those who condemned the Anabaptists did not agree among themselves) contain much that one wishes might be stricken from the pages of church history because its only contribution seems to have been to add fuel to the flames of hatred. But back of all this one can find that there was a real difference of view-point which made it impossible to come to any satisfactory agreement. To this fundamental difference of view-point as to the purposes of the Church, the ideas concerning "ceremonies" and "sacraments" naturally became subsidiary. The Churches which strove for political power wanted these rites as means to acquire and maintain the kind of submission and loyalty which their conception demanded and therefore attached to them a value which would appeal to the autocratically ruled. On the other hand, those who saw in the Church a "Community" of those who composed that section of the kingdom of God which is upon earth, looked upon these rites with a view to their spiritual significance. The longer the Anabaptists viewed the practical results of the positions, held by their opponents, the

more they felt inclined to increase their own emphasis in regard to the matter of sacraments and ceremonies. This fact accounts for a number of the eccentricities which were found in the later Church, especially in places where the persecution had done its worst work.

In connection with the discussions concerning the purposes of the Church, its membership and its "ceremonies" and "sacraments", a third important question was gradually but persistently brot into the foreground. This referred to the ministry in the Church. The common people, who composed the larger portion of the Anabaptist movement, had long had reasons to feel uncomfortable in the presence of the learned. Now the question arose whether a man should be allowed to be a servant of the Church of Jesus Christ because of his intellectual qualifications in case his spiritual life and his moral conduct stood in opposition to the principles of Jesus Christ. This was another result of the study of the Bible by the common people but might have been avoided if it had not been for the gross immoralities which were practiced by too many of the clergy in all of the established Churches. The Anabaptists, not succeeding in improving conditions in the established Churches, proceeded to make provisions against a repetition of such gross inconsistencies in their own "Communities". Even such men as Melchior Hoffmann felt the responsibility of doing constructive work toward the establishment of a more

spiritually-minded ministry. He says: "God's community knows no head but Christ. No other can be endured, for it is a brother and sisterhood. The teachers have none who rule them spiritually but Christ. Teachers and ministers are not lords. The pastors have no authority except to preach God's Word and punish sins. A bishop must be elected out of his community. Where a pastor has thus been taken and the guidance committed to him and his deacon, a community should help to provide properly for those who help to build the Lord's house. When teachers are thus found, there is no fear that the communities will suffer spiritual hunger. A true preacher would willingly see the whole community prophesy." This expression shows a spirit of democracy which pervaded this movement and also an emphasis on the spiritual side to be taken into consideration in connection with the ministry of the Church. This was perfectly in accord with the conception that the Church is a "spiritual priesthood". Every member ought so to live that he might be worthy of being a minister even tho he should never be called to a church. This was the attitude which seems to have been uppermost in the minds of the Anabaptists. If they said of their membership, "lieber kleiner und reiner," they insisted that in the case of the ministers there should be none of the impurities found in the Churches upon which they had felt themselves compelled to turn their backs. Accord-

ing to one of the oldest confessions of faith they believed that the welfare of the Church demanded the election of ministers, in order that the work of the Church might be performed in an orderly way. They considered Jesus Christ the great Bishop (Oberhirte) and believed that He had left an example in that He sent forth men to preach the Gospel to others. Furthermore, the example of Paul in appointing "some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the body of Christ," was taken quite literally by them with special emphasis upon the purposes for which these were appointed and upon the character of the appointees. This gave them preachers of great power. Sometimes the rules of conduct which were laid down for them became very severe, as is shown by the large number of even prominent leaders who were excommunicated. (Cf. e. g. the long list of these cited in Vos, Menno Simons, pp. 256-7.) It also gave calumny an undue opportunity at times. But, on the other hand, it reduced the opportunity considerably to say of the Anabaptist and early Mennonite preachers, as was so often said of the clergy of the established Churches: "Die Pfaffen treiben des Vormittags Götzendienst und des Nachmittags Sünd." (Brons, Ursprung, usw., p. 422.) Menno Simon maintained that preachers should be such "who are moved

by the Holy Ghost, who are pressed by love to God and man, and urged by the Lord Himself, or by His spotless Christian Church, or are called to the service of the Lord by an unblamable, truly believing Christian Church to rightly teach in the house of God, that is, the Church of Jesus Christ, with sound doctrine and with a pious and unblamable conduct, admonish, reprove, rebuke and comfort them in paternal love; to set forth and administer the Lord's Supper in a right manner; to reply diligently with God's Word all deluding and false teachers; to exclude all evil members from the communion of the godly, etc." (Sending Preachers.)

It is interesting to see with what authority some of these men preached or addressed themselves to those in power. It reminds one of I Cor. 7:10: "I give you charge, yet not I, but the Lord." In this they much resembled the early apostles. The various appeals of some of these leaders to the clergy of the established Churches and even to the civil authorities speak of a courage which could hardly have been possible without the conception of the office of the preacher under which they had entered their work.

The application of these high ideals and strict standards to membership in the "Communities" and to the ministry led to an increased use of the "ban" or excommunication. They believed in the exercise of Church discipline and the use of the "ban" for those

who had joined the "Community" and then turned again to sin wilfully and presumptuously (vermessen). They took this step in order that the pure might be separated from the impure and that sinners might be brot to a realization of their position and to repentance, as well as serve as examples to those who might be in danger of committing errors or of falling into sin. They also felt that the "Community" should act in such a case before the "world" had had an opportunity of condemning the sinner. Their conception of the Church as the body of the elect made such a position logically necessary. Their idea was to keep the "Community" free from "spot or wrinkle" and they used the "ban" to this end. It seems to have worked well except in those cases where it was exercised without the moderation for which the ablest leaders stood. Their position was also in accord with their conception in regard to the ethical duties of the members. The "ban" thus became a pedagogical means for the attainment to the high standard of the "Community", as they conceived of it from their study of the New Testament. Except in the cases of misapplied emphasis, the latter reason seems to have been the one uppermost in the minds of the more prominent leaders and its use was productive of much good. In this sense the "ban" became the negative re-iteration of their positive teachings regarding a consistent Christian life. The conditions of that day and espe-

cially the lack of experience on the part of so large a proportion of the membership made it necessary to use negative as well as positive means to secure the desired end. There have been few groups in human society where such has not been the case. The "ban" came to have great disciplinary value and frequently saved the "Communities" from the effects of slanderous reports, for the authorities soon found out that the "Communities" which used this means of discipline might be trusted not to be guilty of the things which were often found with others. The chief difficulty lay in the limitations which necessarily accompanied its use. These were not always studied with the breadth of mind which makes for constructive development and sometimes led to confusion, dissension and even disruption. The tendency to take the Scriptures too literally, combined with the spirit of democracy among the people and the newness of the entire situation made the lack of experience in matters of organization all the more likely to lead to such errors of judgment and did much to bring about the confusion and difficulties that might otherwise have been avoided. Such passages as I Cor. 5:11 and II Thess. 3:14, too literally interpreted, became the source of trouble, especially when the "shunning" was required of husband and wife.

The position advocated in the earlier confessions and striven for under normal conditions was that the exercise of the "ban" should be: "Mit solchem Masse

und in solcher christlichen Bescheidenheit, dass derselbe nicht zur Verderbung, sondern dem Sünder zur Besserung möge gereichen und dienen." So long as this principle was followed the results were good.

The position of the Anabaptists led to still another problem by raising the question as to the attitude of the Christian toward the civil authority. This problem became all the more intricate because of the fact that they stood for the absolute separation of Church and State at a time when the leading Churches emphasized the union of Church and State. The ideals of the Anabaptists were thus made subject to the danger of being interpreted as both heresy and treason. Either one of these charges was bad enough in the 16th century, especially if it was directed against any group of people who had little physical force at their command, but to be subject to both at the same time makes one wonder that there were any traces of the movement left at all.

According to the older confessions of faith the Anabaptists believed that God had ordained the magistracy to punish the bad, protect the good and to rule the world so that there might be good order everywhere. For these reasons they considered it necessary that the magistracy should be obeyed and honored as a servant of God; that all taxes, excises, etc., should be paid "according to the teachings of the Son of God". Matt. 22:21 and 17:27. They considered such an atti-

tude necessary in order that men might enjoy the fruits of good government. History shows that they did not only confess these things but that they also conscientiously observed them.

A literal interpretation of the words of Jesus and a reaction from the abuses all about them made them refuse to swear oaths and to go to war. They believed that these things were forbidden by God and that therefore it was their duty to obey God more than men. These principles may have been too ideal for the 16th century (some people think they are too ideal for today) as many writers would have us think, but the logic of the Anabaptists was of a different type. They believed that truthfulness was better than the swearing of oaths and therefore they spoke the truth and refused to swear the oaths; they believed that killing another was wrong for the nation as well as for the individual and therefore they refused to help the nation do what they would not want to do as individuals. They also felt that if a thing was so fundamentally right that it would be necessary before the consummation of the kingdom of God on earth, then it was right now and ought to be acted upon. There were few cases in which the governments had any reason for complaint against the members of this movement on any other account than these two points and even in the case of the swearing of oaths and the refusal to go to war the rulers had more occasion to wish that all

of their subjects might be of this mind than such in which they found their Anabaptist subjects a real detriment to their government.

This problem was materially affected by the Münster outbreak. Men either did not see or refused to see that if the Münsterites had adhered to the principles of the peaceful Anabaptists, the Münster uprising would have been an impossibility. This unnecessarily confused the issue to the detriment of the government, as well as of the Anabaptist cause.

The spirit of jealousy so rife between the various ruling parties of that day naturally bred the spirit of revenge. Here again the Anabaptists met opposition, for they frankly declared that no man had a right to exercise revenge. This struck at the heart of the ambition of most of the leaders, civil and ecclesiastical of the day and resulted in an unfriendly attitude on the part of these potentates toward those whose position was a reprimand for their own. It was simply another case of vengeance smiting love.

The principle of the Anabaptist members was that they must seek the welfare of all men; the policy of the ambitious authorities was to seek their own end and to crush everyone who stood in the way. The result was inevitable. Might became right and in the eyes of the world came out victorious. Men say today that the Anabaptists appeared too early with their ideals. Men told them that in their day and they re-

plied that these were not their ideals but the ideals of Christ, the Head of the Church, and that He had presented these same ideals fifteen centuries before. The answer they received was calumny and persecution to the point of near-extinction. The world congratulated itself on having gotten rid of such "heretics" and even prided itself on its success. Today we are reaping the ripe fruits of that "success" while the principles for which the Anabaptists lived and died are again being trailed in the dust of human greed!

The Anabaptists believed that it is better to suffer than to inflict suffering; to do good than to do ill and therefore interpreted the Golden Rule and Christ's epitome of the law very literally. This brot them into conflict with the civil authorities because they applied it to governments as well as individuals and it brot them into conflict with the ecclesiastical authorities because it branded the latter as non-Christian so long as they did not recognize Jesus Christ as the supreme Lord in life. This conflict was inevitable so long as the Anabaptists adhered to their principles and the authorities in question to their policies. It was a case of principle and not of personality. Whether the Anabaptists would have been spared their fate if they had succeeded in satisfying the magistrates is an open question, but the writer ventures to suggest that their fate would have been little different for without the hatred of the clergy who felt conscience-stricken and

condemned by the principles and the lives of these people, the magistracy of the then existing governments would probably have caused the Anabaptists little trouble, but this very hatred would have found other means of persuading the authorities to become their tools in order to get rid of these supposed enemies of good government.

The Anabaptists saw this and therefore refused to take any direct part in the official duties of the government. They could not have done otherwise and remained consistent with their conception of Christ as the Head of the Church. If they had yielded they would have become a party to a combination which made the arm of the civil authority and not the will of the Lord the mainstay of the Church.

The writer has looked at a number of summaries of the "reasons why the Anabaptists failed" and has been impressed with the fact that the estimates have always been based on the fact that these people were nearly exterminated. He is glad to find, however, that not every one estimates thus the meaning of the lives and the work of these people who tried so literally to live out the fundamental principles of Jesus Christ. What if their methods seem crude! Were they any more so for their day than ours are for today? They knew less of Christology than we do, but did the actual application of what they believed about the personality of Jesus Christ stand lower in the sight of God

than does ours? Their statements of the work which Jesus Christ accomplished for mankind sometimes grate on modern ears but are we sure that their statements did less honor to His work than do our own? Their conception of the Church seems to many crude and visionary, but are the modern Churches doing more effective work in the kingdom of God than did the simple "Communities" of the Anabaptists and early Mennonites when conditions and opportunities are taken into consideration? The reaction of the Anabaptists against the "sacraments" and the "ceremonies" of the established Churches of their day may seem extreme, but whom shall we follow in this matter, them or their adversaries, when the practices and not the theories are assigned first place? Their requirements for membership in the "Community" may seem too ideal, but what about the feeling of experienced leaders of our own day who say that so much "world" has gotten into the Church that the Church has lost its grip on the world? Their ideals for the ministry may have lacked much that is thot desirable for one to possess who belongs to the "profession", but what of the power of conviction which resulted from the practical application of their ideals? And how about their attitude on anti-militarism? "Jesus believed implicitly in the triumph of meekness, gentleness and love. He knew that the greatest powers on earth were not swords and armies. Despite the long

history of human strife and blood-shed, despite the sad story of man's inhumanity to man, Jesus knew that there was a power in suffering love which could conquer even human malignity and that the forces of evil must at last break themselves upon His divine patience. 'The meek shall inherit the earth', He had dared to declare. In spite of the seeming dominion of ambition and force it is, after all, humility and patience which really subdue the hearts of men. To this principle of the real royalty of meekness and love Jesus Christ committed Himself absolutely in life and in death. He knew that the kingdom of God, founded not on might, but on humility, service and helpfulness, must yet give the law to all kingdoms and that this kingdom, secure as the throne of the eternal Love, would endure and flourish when all others had vanished from the earth." (Stevens, The Christian Doctrine of Salvation, p. 364). Such thots as these, combined with the deep conviction that a Christian must live his profession and the intense desire to be consistent Christians made these simple Anabaptists stand up for the principle of anti-militarism at a time when such an attitude was considered sheer folly because men were depending upon the force of their own arms instead of the "Arm of the Lord", as they professed.

Were these Anabaptists so far wrong in objecting to the union of Church and State? Were they right or

wrong in their insistence that it is better to pray for the government than to help the government prey upon others? Was it really true that by actually telling the truth and refusing to swear oaths they were made worse citizens than those who swore the oaths, all too often in order to cover up untruths? Was Hans Mueller a bad citizen when he stood before the magistrates of Zürich and pled: "Do not lay a burden on my conscience, for faith is a gift given freely by God and is not common property. The mystery of God lies hidden like the treasure in a field, which no one can find but he to whom the Spirit shows it. So I beg you, ye servants of God, let my faith stand free"? Was the only provision which these men made in their obedience, to temporal governments (we must obey God more than men) a sign of treason? If so, then freedom of conscience is treason. Then also Christ is not the Head of the Church on earth. If Christ is the Head of the Church, as these people believed absolutely, then their sad history is another case of:

"Right forever on the scaffold,
Wrong forever on the throne,
Yet, that scaffold sways the future
And behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow
Keeping watch above His own."—Lowell.

APPENDIX I

"DIE SIEBEN ARTIKEL VON SCHLATTEN AM RANDEN"

Vereinbart den 24. Februar 1527. Aeltestes Bekenntnis der Täufer. (Gekürzt durch Dr. Beck).

Zum ersten: So merket von der Taufe: Die Taufe soll allen denen gegeben werden, die belehret sind von der Busse und Aenderung des Lebens und glauben in der Wahrheit, dass ihre Sünden durch Christum hinweggenommen seien. und allen denen, so in der Auferstehung Jesu Christi wandeln und mit ihm in den Tod begraben sein wollen, auf dass sie mit ihm auferstehen mögen, und allen denen, so es in solcher Meinung durch sich selbst von uns begehren und fordern. Damit wird ausgeschlossen alle Kindertaufe, solche hat nicht Grund und Zeugnis in der Schrift und ist gegen den Gebrauch der Apostel—dessen wollen wir uns einfältiglich, doch festiglich, halten und versichert sein.

Zum andern sind wir vereinigt worden von dem Bann also: Der Bann soll gebraucht werden bei allen denen, so sich dem Herrn ergeben und sich Brüder und Schwestern lassen nennen und doch etwa straucheln (umschlipfen) und fallen in ein Fehl und Sünd und unwissentlich übereilt werden. Dieselben sollen ermahnt werden, zum andernmal heimlich, zum drittenmal öffentlich vor aller Gemeine gestraft oder gebannt werden, nach dem Befehl Christi. Matth. 18. Solches soll aber geschehen nach der Ordnung des Geistes Gottes vor dem Brotbrechen, damit wir einmütiglich und in einer Liebe von einem Brot brechen und essen mögen und von einem Kelch trinken.

Zum dritten: In dem Brotbrechen sind wir eins geworden und haben vereinbart, alle die ein Brot brechen wollen zum Gedächtnis des (ge)brochenen Leibes Christi, und alle die von einem Trank trinken wollen, zu einem Gedächtnis

des vergossenen Blutes Christi, die sollen vorher vereinigt sein in einem Leibe Christi, das ist in die Gemeine Gottes, auf welchem Christus das Haupt ist, nämlich durch die Taufe. Denn, wie Paulus anzeigt, so mögen wir nicht auf einmal teilhaftig (sein) des Herrn Tisch und des Teufels Tisch; mögen auch nicht auf einmal teilhaftig sein und trinken von des Herrn Kelch und des Teufels Kelch, das ist: alle, die Gemeinschaft haben mit den todten Werken der Finsternis, die haben kein Teil am Licht. Also auch, welcher nicht die Berufung eines Gottes zu einer Tauf, zu einem Geist, zu einem Glauben, zu einem Leib mit allen Kindern Gottes gemein hat, der mag auch nicht mit in ein Brot werden, wie denn sein muss, wo man das Brot in der Wahrheit nach dem Befehl Christi brechen will.

Zum vierten: Sind wir vereinigt worden, von der Absonderung von dem Bösen und vom Argen, das der Teufel in der Welt gepflanzt hat, also dass wir nicht Gemeinschaft mit ihnen haben, und mit ihnen (nicht) laufen in die Menge ihrer Greuel.—Nun ist uns auch das Gebot des Herrn offenbar, in welchem er uns heisst abgesondert sein, wollen wir seine Söhne und Töchter sein; weiter ermahnt er uns darum, von Babylon und dem irdischen Egypten abzugehen, dass wir nicht teilhaftig werden ihrer Qual und Leiden, so der Herr über sie führen wird. Die Greuel, welche wir meiden sollen—damit sind gemeint alle päbstlichen und widerpäbstlichen Werke und Gottesdienste, Versammlungen, Kirchgang und Häuser, Bürgerschaften und Verpflichtungen des Unglaubens und andere mehr dergleichen, die dann die Welt für hoch hält—von diesem allen sollen wir abgesondert werden, und kein Teil mit solchem haben, denn es sind eitel Greuel, die uns verhasst machen vor unserem Christo Jesu, welcher uns entledigt hat von der Dienstbarkeit des Fleisches.

Zum fünften sind wir von wegen der Hirten in der Gemeine Gottes also vereinigt worden: Der Hirt in der Gemeine Gottes soll einer sein nach der Ordnung Pauli ganz und gar, der ein gutes Zeugnis habe vor denen, die ausser dem Glauben sind. Solches Amt soll sein: Lesen, Vermah-

nen und Lehren, Strafen, Bannen in der Gemeine, und allen Brüdern und Schwestern zur Besserung vorbeten, das Brot anheben zu brechen, und in allen Dingen des Leibes Christi Acht haben, dass er gebaut und gebessert werde, und dem Lästerer der Mund verstopfet werde—dieser aber soll erhalten werden, wo er Mangel haben wird, von der Gemeine, welche ihn erwählet hat, damit, welcher dem Evangelio dienet, von demselben auch lebe, wie der Herr verordnet hat; so aber ein Hirt etwas handeln würde, das zu strafen wäre, soll mit ihm nichts gehandelt werden, ohne zwei bis drei Zeugen, und so sie sündigen, sollen sie vor allen gestraft werden, damit die andern Furcht haben. So aber dieser Hirt vertrieben, oder durch das Kreuz dem Herrn hingeführt wird, soll von Stund an ein anderer an die Statt verordnet werden, damit das Völklein und das Häuflein Gottes nicht zerstört werde.

Zum sechsten sind wir vereinigt worden von dem Schwert also: Das Schwert ist eine Gottes-Ordnung ausserhalb der Vollkommenheit Christi, welches den Bösen straft und tödtet, und den Guten schützet und schirmt.—Dasselbige zu gebrauchen sind die weltlichen Obrigkeiten geordnet.—In der Vollkommenheit Christi aber wird der Bann alleine gebraucht, zu einer Mahnung und Ausschliessung des, der gesündigt hat im Tod des Fleisches. Nun wir von vielen, die nicht den Willen Christi gegen uns erkennen, gefragt, ob auch ein Christ um des Guten Schutz und Schirm oder um der Liebe willen möge oder solle das Schwert brauchen gegen den Bösen. Die Antwort ist offenbar, einmütiglich also: Christus lehrt, dass wir von ihm lernen sollen, denn er sei mild und von Herzen demütiglich und so werden wir in Ruhe finden unsere Seelen. (Hinweisung auf Christo und die Ehebrecherin.) Zum andern wird gefragt des Schwertes halber, ob ein Christ soll Urteil sprechen in weltlichem Zank und Spann, so die Ungläubigen miteinander haben, ist das die einige Antwort: Christus hat nicht des Erbteils halben zwischen Bruder und Bruder entscheiden wollen, sondern hat sich stets desselben gewidert (geweigert); also sollen wir auch tun. Zum dritten wird des Schwertes halben gefragt: Soll das eine Obrigkeit sein, so einer dazu erwählt wird? Dem

wird also geantwortet: Christus hat zu einem König gemacht werden sollen, und er ist geflohen und hat nicht angesehen die Ordnung seines Vaters, also sollen wir auch tun, so werden wir nicht in der Finsternis wandeln. Auch verbietet er selbst die Gewalt des Schwerts. Also sagt weiter Paulus: Welche Gott versehen hat, die hat er auch verordnet, dass sie gleichbürtig sein sollen dem Ebenbilde seines Sohnes.—Zuletzt wird es gemerkt, dass es den Christen nicht ziemen mag, eine Obrigkeit zu sein, (denn) der Oberen Regiment ist nach dem Fleisch, der Christen nach dem Geist — ihre Streit- und Kriegswaffen sind fleischlich—der Christen Waffen aber sind geistlich wider die Befestung des Teufels; die Weltlichen werden gewappnet mit Stachel und Eisen, die Christlichen mit dem Harnisch Gottes, mit Wahrheit, mit Gerechtigkeit, Friede, Glauben, Heil, in Summa: mit dem Worte Gottes.

Zum siebenten sind wir von dem Eid also eins geworden: Der Eid ist eine Befestigung unter denen, die da zanken oder verheissen, und ist im Gesetz geheissen worden, dass er soll geschehen bei dem Namen Gottes, allein wahrhaftig und nicht falsch. Christus, der die Vollkommenheit des Gesetzes lehret, verbietet den Seinen alles Schwören, weder recht noch falsch, weder beim Himmel, noch bei dem Erdreich, noch bei Jerusalem, noch bei unserm Haupt, und das um der Ursache willen, wie er bald nachher (Matth. 5) spricht. Sehet, darum ist alles Schwören verboten.

Liebe Brüder und Schwestern, das sind die Artikel, die etliche Brüder bisher irrig und nicht gleich verstanden haben und (sind) damit viel schwache Gewissen verwirrt, darnach der Name Gottes gar grässlich verlästert worden ist, darnach es denn nötig gewesen ist, dass wir im Herrn vereinigt worden sind. Gott sei Lob und Preis. (Copy found in Kurzgefasste Geschichte und Glaubenslehre der Altevangelischen Taufgesinnten oder Mennoniten, pp. 166-9, Carl H. A. van der Smissen.)

APPENDIX II

Wiedertäufer Artikl vom Jahr 1527, zusammengestellt nach den Bekenntnissen der 1527—1528 in der Stadt Steyer verhörten Wiedertäufer aus der Bruderschaft des Hans Hut.

1527. W. Täufer in Stadt Steier und Freynstadt.

Artigkl der gemainen urgichten vnnd bekhanntnussen aller widergtaufften so befragt worden:

Der Tauff, so die Jungen khinder Emphahen, sey nis nutz, auch khain Sacrament.

Nach der Ordnung Christi soll ainem zuvoran das wort gotts verkundt vnd gepredigt werden, vnd so er dann dasselb geglaubt, soll Er darnach getaufft werden.

Im selben Tauff erwillig ain yeder in Ir Brüderschafft. Dieselbig Ir Brüderschafft sey die cristenlich gemaindt oder die gemaindt gottes, vnd die andern ausserhalb Irer Brüderschafft seyen die gottlossen.

Die bemelten Ire Gemainden Erwellen aus Inen ettlich, die predigen, ander Brüder unnd Schwester aufnehmen und Tauffen sollen.

Wann sy Tauffen, sogen sy: Ich tauf dich im Namen des Vatters, Sons vnd heyligen geists vnnd bezeichnen den, der sich Tauffen last, mit wasser an der Styrn.

Khainer soll eigens haben, sonder der alle Ding Inen gemain sein.

Ir widertauff sey khain Sacrament, sonder ain zeichen, dardurch Sy sich got Ergeben vnd Ir gemuret geb. Khunsst vnnd der Gemaind gottes (sic).

Inen sey verpoten, in die kirchen zu geen, Mess, predig oder anndere ampter dar Inn ze heren.

Auf pildnissen sey nichts zu halten.

Die Todten heiligen mugen nit furpitter sein, noch vnns Erschiessen bey got. Die lebendigen Heiligen seyen die Brüdern vnnd Schwestern Iner Brüderschafft vnnd christenli-

chend Gemaind, die sollen und mugen wor für ainander pitten vnnd gnad erwerben.

Die peucht der Briester in der kirchen sey nichts, aber ain yeder mag dem anndern sein sindt peuchten vnnd antzeigen, damit Er gott für In bitt.

Christus sey mit seinem Leyb nit im Sacrament des Altars, sonder im Himel vnnd kommbt nit herab bis an den Jüngsten Tag.

Christus hat im Nachtmal seinen Jüngern allein prot vnnd wein zu essen vnnd Trinkhen gegeben vnnd nit sein Leib. Zu Gedächtnis desselben halten Sy, so offt Sy aus ainer versammlung voneinander geen, auch dasselbig nachtmal, vnnd nyessen ain prot und wein, wo Sy es haben.—Das Sacrament sey auch allain prot vnnd wein vnnd weder plut noch Fleisch noch der Leib Christi.

Sy halten auch nichts von den Siben Sacramenten.

Der Jüngst tag sey nachendt, assdann werden Sy mit Christo Regiern auf erden.

Vnnd nyemand mag saelig werden, dann durch leyden, das sey die Recht Tauf des plüts, darein Sy sich durch den Tauf des wassers verwilligen.

"Die obgeschrieben Artigkl Glauben vnnd bekhennen Sy allgemainicklich, doch mit aennderung etlicher wortt, die doch kain andern sondern verstandt bringen." (So meint Khuenigl, von dem die obige Zusammenstelling offenbar herrührt).

(For further quotation from the original cf. Loserth, Dr. Balthasar Hubmaier, pp. 208-10.)

APPENDIX III

PESECUTIONS AND THE PESECUTED

Estimates by Various Writers.

"But the persecution, with its peculiar atrocities, had been acting in its usual way on the Anabaptists of the Netherlands. They had been tortured on the rack, scourged, imprisoned in dungeons, roasted to death before slow fires, and

had seen their women drowned, buried alive, pressed into coffins too small for their bodies till their ribs were broken, others stamped into them by the feet of the executioners. Is it to be wondered at that those who stood firm sometimes gave way to hysterical excesses; that their leaders began to preach another creed than that of passive resistance; that the wild apocalyptic visions were reported and believed?" (Lindsay, A History of the Reformation,—The Reformation in Lands beyond Germany, p. 237.)

"Die Reformation war nur zu derjenigen Glaubens- und Gewissensfreiheit gelangt, die man für sich fordert, aber noch nicht zu derjenigen, die man andern gewährt. Der Drang der reformatorischen Arbeit erlaubte es nicht, den Kirchenbegriff gehörig zu entwickeln. Mit dem damaligen Kirchenbegriff war seit dem zwölften Jahrhundert die Theorie verbunden, dass die Abweichung von der Kirchenlehre der persönlichen Sünde zuzuschreiben sei. An diesem von Thomas von Aquino wissenschaftlich begründeten Lehrsatz haben die Protestanten noch lange nicht gerüttelt, wiewohl sie selbst die Opfer dieser Theorie waren. Sie haben ihn offenbar vorderhand als nötiges Uebel beibehalten, um ihn abzuschaffen sobald sie selbst ihn nicht mehr nötig hatten." (Mueller, Geschichte der Bernischen Wiedertäufer, p. 14.)

"Zurkinden 1506-88; 1532, Verwalter der Teutschordenscompturei in Summiswald, 1534 Bernischer Stadtschreiber, 1537 Landvogt in Bonmont im Pays de Gex und 1544-47 in Nyon. Aus seinen Briefen an Calvin teilt sein Biograph Dr. A. von Gonzenbach im Berner Taschenbuch, 1877, Abschnitte mit. (Cf. Mueller, Geschichte der Bernischen Wiedertäufer, pp. 76ff.)

Zurkinden holds that perfect agreement in doctrine is not to be expected and that mercy is of greater importance anyway. "Darf ich es Ihnen eingestehen, ehrwürdiger Bruder, dass ich, sei es aus Mangel an Einsicht, sei es aus Aengstlichkeit, zu der Zahl derjenigen gehöre, die da wünschen, dass das Schwert immer seltener gebraucht werde, um bewusste oder unbewusste Irrlehren, die dem christlichen Glauben widerstreiten, zu unterdrücken . . . Ich ziehe es vor,

die Regierung durch übertriebene Milde, als durch übertriebene Strenge fehlen zu sehen." As one of the reasons for this position he tells of the burning of an eighty-year-old woman and her daughter, the mother of six fatherless children, who were tortured to death because of baptism.

"Der Mensch ist nun einmal so geartet, dass er der Ueberzeugung lieber nachgibt als der Gewalt; mancher ist dem Henker gegenüber verstockt, der sanften Zureden nicht widerstanden hätte . . Ein letztes Argument, das ich anführen muss, besteht darin, dass wir den Papisten, deren Grausamkeit wir mit Recht gebrandmarkt haben, durch nichts angenehmer sein können, als wenn wir ihr Beispiel nachahmen, und auch in unserer Kirche den Henker mit seinen Torturwerkzeugen wieder einführen. Nichts wäre gehässiger!—Ich wage es kaum, Ihnen ganz privatim davon zu sprechen, weil ich keinen meiner Gedanken verbergen mag." (Ausführliches bei Dr. Oechsli, Quellenbuch zur Schweizergeschichte, S. 347.)

Even Kessler had to admit that the Anabaptists in "their walk and conversation are throughout pious, holy and blameless . . . They carry no weapons, neither sword nor dagger . . . They swear not, nay, not even take they the civic oath to any authority . . . They purge their members daily," etc. (Cf. Bax, The Rise and Fall of the Anabaptists, p. 56.)

"Wiewohl ich kein Wiedertäufer bin," schrieb Schwenkfeld am 24. September 1531 an Bader, "auch auf ihre Weise nie getauft worden bin, kann ich doch aus Eurem Schreiben spüren, dass ich bei Euch nicht ohne Verdacht bin. Sollen aber alle die Wiedertäufer sein, die von der Kindertaufe nichts halten, so sind jetzt überall viele Wiedertäufer und werden mit der Zeit mehr werden, als ihrer zuvor gewesen. Dass man mir aber etliche irrige Artikel der Wiedertäufer wollte zumessen . . . das würde ich zur Errettung meines christlichen Namens, sofern es dem Herrn gefällig, nicht unverantwortet lassen; denn Gott hat mir einen Glauben gegeben, der sich wohl am Licht lässt ansehen. Die Wiedertäufer sind mir deshalb desto lieber, dass sie sich um göttliche Wahrheit etwas mehr denn um viele Gelehrten beküm-

mern. Wer Gott sucht im Ernst, der wird ihn finden. Dass Ihr sie blinde Wiedertäufer und des Teufels Märtyrer nennt, werdet Ihr vor Gott verantworten. Mir hat einer die Antwort darauf gegeben: Wo sie vor Euch und Euresgleichen neuen Päbstlern und Schrifttyrannen öffentlich möchten Platz haben und sicher wären, so dürften sie nicht in die Winkel kriechen. Sie wüssten auch niemand, der sie marterte, denn der Teufel mit seinen Gliedern und Haufen . . . Wie dem allem auch sei, mein Bruder Bader, so will ich Euch noch zuletzt treulich ermahnt haben, Ihr wollet von solchem schweren gefährlichen Eifer, den Ihr wider diese armen Leute habt, bei Zeiten abstehen . . . Ihr müsst darüber vor Gott eine ernste Busse tun, dass Ihr sie ausgeputzt als Grubenhäurer, Friedenbrecher und die, die Gottheit Christi verleugnen, hingestellt, etc. Item Ihr vergleicht sie den allerungehorsamsten Leuten, die das Erdreich je getragen hat, die also billig vor der ganzen Welt durchächtet, verjagt, getötet, erhängt und ertränkt würden; denn es wäre unmöglich nach natürlicher Ehrbarkeit, dass das Erdreich einen solchen abgöttischen Orden leiden möchte usw.—Das habe ich Euch müssen erinnern, ob Euch solches dermaleinst in Euer Herz schlüge, Gott um Vergebung und Gnade anzurufen; denn heisst das nicht das Schwert gewetzt? . . . Von den Täufern habe ich darum umso freier geredet, weil sie auch wider mich ein Büchlein haben ausgehen lassen, deshalb ich jetzt, wo man's glauben will, unparteiisch hierin befunden würde." (Cf. Hege, Die Täufer in der Kurpfalz, pp. 18-19; also Corpus Schwenkfeldianorom, Part IV, pp. 240 and 257.) (Hege took his quotations from Schwenkfeld's Epistolar, 2. Buch des 2. Teils den 21. Sendbrief, p. 296—315.)

APPENDIX IV

"Articul III. Von der Wieder-auffrichtung und Versühnung des Menschlichen Geschlechts mit Gott.

"Was die Wieder-auffrichtung des ersten Menschen und seiner Nachkommen betrifft / davon bekennen und glauben

wir / dass unangesehen diesen ihren Fall / übertretung und Sünde / und ob wollen ihnen gäntzlich kein vermügen war / Gott dennoch darumb sie nicht gantz und gar hat wollen verwerffen / noch ewig verlohren bleiben lassen / sondern dass er sie wiederumb su sich geruffen / getröstet und gezeiget hat / dass den ihm noch Mittel ihrer versünung wäre / nemlich das unbefleckte Lamb (oder Sohn) Gottes / welcher dazu albereits vor der Welt Anfang versehen / und ihnen / als sie noch im Paradeys waren / zu Trost / Erlösung und Seligkeit / so wol für sie als ihre Nachkömlingen verheissen und zugesagt / ja ihnen von der Zeit an durch den Glauben als eygen gegeben und geschoncke ist / Wornach allen Frommen Altvätteren hat verlanget / welchen diese verheissungen zum öfftern ist ernewert / die darnach geforschet / und durch den Glauben von ferne nach ihm aussgesehen und auff die Erfülling gewartet haben / dass / wenn er kommen würde / er das gefallene Menschliche Geschlechte von ihren Sünden / Schuldt und Ungerechtigkeit wiederumb erlösen / frey machen / und auffhelffen sollte." Joh. 1. vers. 29. 1. Petri 1. vers. 19. Gen. 3. vers. 15. 1 Joh. 3. vers. 8. 1 Joh. 2. vers. 1. Hebr. 11. v. 19. 39. Gal. 4. v. 4. (Christliche Glaubens-Bekentnus, T. T. V. S., pp. 5-6.)

APPENDIX V

"Articul IV. Von der Zukunfft unsers Erlösers und Seligmachers Jesu Christi.

SO glauben und bekennen wir ferner / dass / als diese Zeit der Verheissung / nach welcher alle fromme Alt-Vätter so sehr verlanget und darauff gewartet haben / umb / und erfüllet war / dass damals dieser verheissene Messias / Erlöser und Seligmacher von Gott aussgange / gesandt und (nach der Weissagung der Propheten und Gezeugnisse der Evangelisten) in die Welt / ja ins Fleisch kommen / geoffenbahret und das Wort selbst Fleisch und Mensch worden ist / und dass er in der Jungfrawen Maria (die verlobet war mit einem Manne / genant Joseph vom Hause Davids) ist emp-

fangen / und dass sie denselben / als ihren Erst-geboren Sohn / zu Bethlehem gebohren / in windelen gewickelt / und in eine Krippen gelegt hat. (Joh. 4. vers. 25. Joh. 16. vers. 28. 1 Tim. 3. vers. 16. Joh. 1. vers. 14. Matth. 1. vers. 22. Luc. 2. vers. 7. 21.)

Wir bekennen und glauben auch / dass dieser derselbige ist / dessen Auszgang von Anfang und von Ewigkeit gewesen ist / ohn anfang der Tagen / oder Ende des Lebens: Der selber das A, und O, Anfang und Ende / der Erste und der Letzte bezeuget wird zu seyn: Dass dieser auch derselbe ist und kein ander / der auszersehen / verheissen / gesandt und in die Welt kommen / und der Gottes eyniger / erster und einiger Sohn / der vor Johannes dem Täuffer / vor Abraham / ja Davids HERR und aller Welt Gott ist / der Erst-gebohrne vor allen Creaturen / der in die Welt gebracht / und ihm ein Leib bereitet ist / welchen er selber zu einem Opffer und Gabe übergeben hat / Gott zu einem süssen Geruch / ja zu Trost / Erlösung und Seligkeit für alle / und für das gantze Menschliche Geschlecht. (Mich. 5. vers. 2. Hebr. 7. vers. 3. Apoc. 1. vers. 8. 18. Joh. 3. vers. 16. Hebr. 1. vers. 6. Rom. 8. vers. 32. Matt. 22. vers. 41. Col. 1. vers. 15. Aebr. 10. vers. 5.)

Was aber anlanget / wie und auff was Weise dieser würdiger Leib bereitet / und wie das Wort Fleisch / und er selbst Mensch geworden ist / darinn sind wir vernüget mit der erklärung welche die heilige Evangelisten in ihrer beschreibung davon gethan und nachgelassen haben / nach welcher wir sampt allen Heiligen ihn bekennen und halten für den Sohn des Lebendigen Gottes / in welchem all unsere Hoffnung / Trost / Erlösung und Seligkeit besteht / und dass wir dieselbe auch in niemanden anders mügen noch sollen suchen. (Luc. 1. vers. 31. 32. 33. Joh. 20. v. 30. 31. Matt. 16. vers. 16.)

Weiter gläuben und bekennen wir mit der Schrift / nach dem er hier seinen Lauff vollendet / und das Werck / darumb er gesandt und in die Welt kommen war / volbracht hatte / dass er nach Gottes Fürsehung ist überantwortet in die hände der Ungerechten / und dass er unter dem Richter Pontio Pilato gelitten hat / dass er gekreuziget / gestorben /

begraben / am dritten Tage vom Tode wiederaufferstanden und gen Himmel gefahren ist / und dass er sitzt zur rechten Handt Gottes der Majestät in der Höhe / von dannen er kommen wird zu richten die Lebendigen und die Todten. (Luc. 23. vers. 53. Luc. 23. vers. 1. Luc. 24. vers. 5. 6. Luc. 24. vers. 51.)

Und dass also der Sohne Gottes gestorben ist / für alle den Todt geschmecket / und seyn theurbar Blut vergossen hat / und dass er dadurch der Schlangen den Kopff zertreten / die Wercke des Teufels zerstöhret / die Handschrifft zu nicht gemacht / und vergebung der Sünden für das gantze Menschliche Geschlecht erworben hat / und dass er also ein uhrsach der ewigen Seligkeit geworden ist für alle die jenigen (von Adam an bis an der Welt ende) deren ein jeder in seiner Zeit an ihn gläuben und gehorsam seyn wird. (Gen. 3. vers. 15. 1 Joh. 3. vers. 8. Coloss. 2. vers. 14. Rom. 5. vers. 18.) (Christliche Glaubens-Bekentnus, T. T. V. S. pp. 6-9.)

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The search for the literature necessary for this undertaking has been a valuable experience for the writer. He found little literature bearing directly upon his subject, but much which was very suggestive, sometimes tantalizingly so, especially when there was just enough suggestion to make one feel quite sure that he was on the track of important facts, but not enough to make one feel warranted in deciding definitely as to which way the facts would effect the conclusions.

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The writer has not listed all of the literature examined in order to find material because some of it imparted no usable information and some of it contained nothing valuable beyond the quotations taken from such works which were used. The suggestions sometimes came from such books as have not been listed and thus helped the writer in finding the original.

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